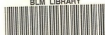


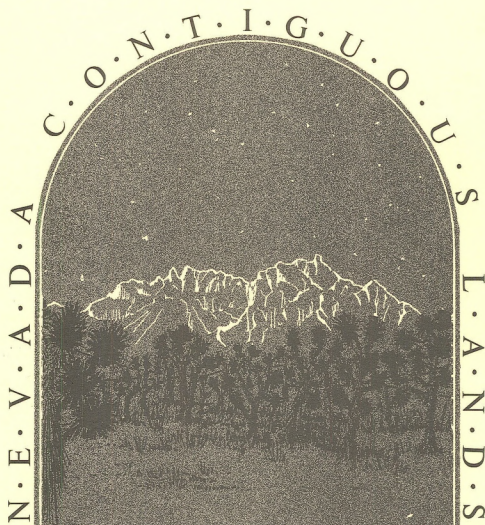


# BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

LAS VEGAS and WINNEMUCCA DISTRICTS



88045155



## WILDERNESS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

JANUARY 1990

# FINAL

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88045155

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

NEVADA STATE OFFICE  
850 Harvard Way  
P.O. Box 12000  
Reno, Nevada 89520-0006



HD 243  
1A3  
W566  
1990

IN REPLY REFER TO:

(8500)  
(NV-932.6)

January 22, 1990

Dear Reader:

Enclosed for your review is the Nevada Contiguous Lands Final Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The final EIS analyzes the Las Vegas, Winnemucca and Ely Districts' proposals to recommend a portion of two Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) as suitable for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS) and release from further consideration eleven WSAs and one Instant Study Area (ISA).

The final EIS has been completed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). These recommendations may be subject to change through administrative review after receipt of the minerals reports from the Bureau of Mines and U.S. Geological Survey. If significant information contained in the minerals reports indicates a need for change in the proposals analyzed in this EIS, a supplemental EIS will be issued and distributed for public review.

We appreciate your interest and involvement in the study process for these wilderness study areas.

Sincerely,

  
Edward F. Spang  
State Director, Nevada

1 Enclosure:

Encl. 1 - Nevada Contiguous Lands  
Final Wilderness EIS (450 pp)

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FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATIONS

for

NEVADA CONTIGUOUS LANDS

Prepared by


DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

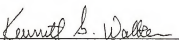
WINNEMUCCA DISTRICT

LAS VEGAS DISTRICT

ELY DISTRICT

  
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Ron Wenker  
Winnemucca District Manager

  
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Ben F. Collins  
Las Vegas District Manager

  
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Kenneth G. Walker  
Ely District Manager

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Edward F. Spang  
State Director, Nevada

The proposed land use plan contains wilderness recommendations for 200,918 acres of public land in Clark, Lincoln, White Pine and Humboldt Counties, Nevada. The action responds to the mandate of Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 to review all public land roadless areas of 5,000 acres or more; determine their suitability or nonsuitability for wilderness designation; and report these suitability recommendations to the President no later than October 21, 1991.

For further information contact: Dave Wolf, Wilderness Program Coordinator, Nevada State Office, 850 Harvard Way, P.O. Box 12000, Reno, NV 89520, or call (702) 328-6283 or FTS 470-6283.

Date the final environmental impact statement with the wilderness recommendations was made available to the public: January 22, 1990

BLMLVPT890158500



## SUMMARY

### PURPOSE

The purpose of the Proposed Action in two of the wilderness study areas (WSAs) examined in this EIS, as the Wilderness Act states, "is to secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness." In 12 of the WSAs the purpose is to manage for use other than wilderness. This document analyzes the potential impacts of designating or not designating as wilderness all or portions of 13 WSAs and one Instant Study Area in Clark, Lincoln, White Pine, and Humboldt Counties, Nevada. The Proposed Action represents the BLM's preliminary recommendations for these 13 WSAs and one Instant Study Area as they were developed through the Bureau planning system.

The study areas are listed in Table S-1.

### ISSUES

The scoping process for the Nevada Contiguous Lands Wilderness EIS encompassed issues identified by BLM staff and by the public during a formal scoping comment period on Issue Identification in Reno, Las Vegas and Ely (August 1987). The environmental issues identified for analysis in this EIS are listed below:

- Impacts on Wilderness Values
- Impacts on Exploration for and Development of Non-Energy Mineral Resources
- Impacts on the Existing Material Site Rights-of-Way
- Impacts on the Exploration for Oil and Gas
- Impacts on the Levels of Motorized Recreational Use
- Impacts on Recreation Management
- Impacts on Grazing Management
- Impacts on the Development of Utilities
- Impacts on the Development of a Rail Line
- Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise
- Impacts on Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Endangered Species Habitat

The following issues were identified in scoping but were not selected for detailed analysis in the EIS:

- Impacts on Military Overflights
- Impacts on Cultural Resources
- Impacts on Reintroduction and Management of Bighorn Sheep and Pronghorn
- Impacts on Water Sources
- Impacts on Livestock Development and Maintenance Activities
- Impacts on Private Inholdings



Table S-1

## LIST OF WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS AND ISA

WSA Name	Land Use Plan	Acreage	District
Marble Canyon (NV040-086)	Shell	19,150	Ely
Fish & Wildlife No. 1 (NV050-201)	Clark/Caliente	11,090	Las Vegas
Fish & Wildlife No. 2 (NV050-216)	Clark	17,242	Las Vegas
Fish & Wildlife No. 3 (NV050-217)	Clark	22,002	Las Vegas
Ilme Canyon (NV050-231)	Clark	34,680	Las Vegas
Million Hills (NV050-233)	Clark	21,296	Las Vegas
Garrett Buttes (NV050-235)	Clark	11,835	Las Vegas
Quail Springs (NV050-411)	Clark	12,145	Las Vegas
El Dorado (NV050-423)	Clark	12,290	Las Vegas
Ireteba Peaks (NV050-438)	Clark	14,994	Las Vegas
Jumbo Springs (NV050-236)	Clark	3,466 <u>a/</u>	Las Vegas
Nellis ABC (NV050-04R-15)	Clark	5,718 <u>a/</u>	Las Vegas
Evergreen ABC (NV050-01R-16)	Caliente	2,694 <u>a/</u>	Las Vegas
Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Natural Area (ISA)	Sonoma-Gerlach Paradise-Denio	12,316	Winnemucca
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>200,918 Acres</b>	

a/ 202s - Each area is divide into subunit's of less than 5,000 acres. The areas do not meet the 5,000 acre size criteria (continuous roadless lands) under Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA). These WSAs qualify under Section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.

## ALTERNATIVES AND CONCLUSIONS

The alternatives assessed in this Final EIS include: (1) an All Wilderness Alternative for each WSA, (2) a No Wilderness/No Action Alternative for each WSA and (3) a Partial Wilderness Alternative for five of the 14 WSAs.

### MARBLE CANYON WSA (NV-040-086)

#### Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness Alternative)

The Proposed Action recommends 8,300 acres suitable for wilderness designation and 10,850 acres nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-1).

#### CONCLUSIONS

The result of designating the suitable portion of the WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the excellent opportunities for solitude and opportunities for primitive recreation, highly scenic geologic values and the stands of bristlecone pine. Long-term physical impacts to the wilderness qualities in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would occur on approximately 10 acres. These impacts would be concentrated north of Bars Canyon and on the eastern benches of the WSA. The majority of the disturbance would be related to marble exploration and stock reservoir construction. The remaining 10,840 acres would retain their wilderness values except for the creation of a few primitive two-track routes.

Exploration and development of marble resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. All lands within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no adverse impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the nonsuitable portion.

The use of motorbikes to assist in the trailing of livestock would not be allowed in the suitable portion; however, the elimination of this activity would have only a negligible effect on grazing operations since only a small portion of the suitable area lends itself to motorbike use.

#### All Wilderness Alternative

All 19,150 acres of public land in the Marble Canyon WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-2).

#### CONCLUSIONS

The result of designating the WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the bristlecone pine, geologic and archaeological values and prime raptor habitat. The outstanding opportunities for solitude and the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be retained on 19,148 acres.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. Restricted exploration activity would occur. Development of the marble reserves is not expected to take place.

The construction of two stock reservoirs would not be allowed. The absence of the reservoirs would have no effect on current grazing practices. The switching from the use of motorbikes to horses to accomplish livestock trailing would have a slight adverse economic impact on the operator.

### **No Wilderness Alternative**

None of the 19,150 acres of the Marble Canyon WSA would be recommended for wilderness designation (Map 2-3).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Long term physical impairment to the wilderness qualities would occur on approximately 10 acres near Bars Canyon and the eastern bench of the Marble Canyon WSA. Opportunities for solitude and primitive unconfined recreation would be largely unaffected. The bristlecone pine and archaeological values would be unaffected. Some raptor habitat would be slightly impaired in the vicinity of Bars Canyon. The remaining 19,140 acres would retain their wilderness values except for the creation of a few primitive two-tracked routes.

All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no adverse impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources.

There would be no adverse impact on grazing management within the Marble Canyon WSA under the No Wilderness Alternative.

### **FISH AND WILDLIFE NO. 1 (NV-050-201)**

#### **Proposed Action (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative)**

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 11,090 acre area unsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-4).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Utilization of the WSA for the projected development of utilities, motorized recreational vehicle use, extraction of sand and gravel and mineral exploration could physically disturb up to an estimated 823 acres. The natural perception of the entire WSA would be impaired by the construction of utilities (towers, lines, roads) across the landscape. Outstanding opportunities for solitude and opportunities for primitive recreation would be diminished and, in some instances lost due to the audio and visual distractions from the aforementioned activities occurring in the WSA. A potential for loss of desert tortoise is anticipated as a result of the activities mentioned above. However, the implementation of stringent management actions, such as restricted utility development, motorized recreational use and implementation of reclamation stipulations for mineral exploration, would provide protection to maintain a viable population.

All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. Adverse impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources is not anticipated.

Motorized recreational use could continue within the WSA under the Proposed Action, benefiting this activity. However, potential and discretionary management actions may restrict this use as a result of categorization of the area's tortoise habitat. Impacts to this activity would be negligible.

The development of utilities could occur as a result of the entire WSA being recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation.

All lands within the WSA could remain open to the development of material sites. There would be no negative impacts on the extraction of materials from the two existing material sites. However, potential and discretionary management actions may restrict this use as a result of categorization

of the area's tortoise habitat.

Under the Proposed Action, an estimated total of up to 823 acres of Category I desert tortoise habitat could be lost under full utilization of the WSA for utility development, motorized recreational use, extraction of sand and gravel and mineral exploration. However, some potential impacts adverse to the habitat might be mitigated through the implementation of management actions.

#### **All Wilderness Alternative**

All 11,090 acres of public land in the Fish and Wildlife No. 1 WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-5).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Designating the WSA as wilderness would preserve wilderness values of naturalness and outstanding opportunities that exist for solitude and would enhance the protection of desert tortoise. Activities related to the authorized extraction of sand and gravel would impair naturalness qualities over approximately 320 acres of the WSA. Special features would be afforded added protection from wilderness designation by the restriction of potential surface disturbing activities.

Exploration for and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. Mineral exploration activity projected to occur without wilderness designation would not occur due to the lack of valid claims if designation occurs. Development of mineral resources is not projected to take place.

Motorized recreational use of 45 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the WSA would be unavailable for the development of utilities. Less desirable routes would be utilized by potential utility users.

Development of material sites within the WSA would not be adversely impacted under the All Wilderness Alternative. Full utilization of the two existing material sites would occur under perpetuity and no other material sites are projected to be developed.

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, crucial desert tortoise habitat would be preserved within an estimated 97 percent of the WSA. Approximately 320 acres of Category I habitat would be lost to the authorized extraction of sand and gravel.

### **FISH AND WILDLIFE NO. 2 (NV-050-216)**

#### **Proposed Action (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative)**

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 17,242 acre area nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-6).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Unrestricted utilization of the WSA for the projected development of utilities and motorized recreational use could physically disturb up to an estimated 400 acres. The natural perception of the entire WSA would be impaired by the construction of utilities (towers, lines, roads) across the landscape. Outstanding opportunities for solitude and opportunities for primitive recreation would be diminished and, in some instances lost due to the audio and visual distractions from the

aforementioned activities occurring in the WSA. A potential for loss of desert tortoise is anticipated as a result of the activities mentioned above. However, the implementation of stringent management actions, such as restricted utility development and motorized recreational use, would provide protection to maintain a viable population.

Motorized recreational use could continue within the WSA under the Proposed Action, benefiting this activity. However, potential and discretionary management actions may restrict this use as a result of categorization of the area's tortoise habitat. Impacts to this activity would be negligible.

The development of utilities could occur as a result of the entire WSA being recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Under the Proposed Action, an estimated total of up to 400 acres of Category I desert tortoise habitat could be lost under full utilization of the WSA for utility development, motorized recreational use, and mineral exploration.

### All Wilderness Alternative

All 17,242 acres of public land in the Fish and Wildlife No. 2 WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-7).

### **CONCLUSIONS**

Designating the WSA as wilderness would preserve wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities that exist for solitude, and would enhance the protection of desert tortoise.

Motorized recreational use of 75 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the WSA would be unavailable for the development of utilities. Less desirable routes would be utilized by potential utility users.

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, Category I desert tortoise habitat would be preserved within the WSA.

## **FISH AND WILDLIFE NO. 3 (NV-050-217)**

### Proposed Action (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative)

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 22,002 acre area nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-8).

### **CONCLUSIONS**

Unrestricted utilization of the WSA for the projected development of utilities, motorized recreational vehicle use and extraction of sand and gravel could physically disturb up to an estimated 696 acres. The natural perception of the entire WSA would be impaired by the construction of utilities (towers, lines, roads) across the landscape. Outstanding opportunities for solitude and opportunities for primitive recreation would be diminished and, in some instances lost due to the audio and visual distractions from the aforementioned activities occurring in the WSA. The penstemon would be afforded protection through standard mitigative measures. A potential for loss of desert tortoise is anticipated as a result of the activities mentioned above. However, the implementation of stringent management actions, such as restricted utility development, motorized recreational use and



authorization of sand and gravel material sites, would provide protection to maintain a viable population.

Motorized recreational use could continue within the WSA under the Proposed Action, benefiting this activity. However, potential and discretionary management actions may restrict this use as a result of categorization of the area's tortoise habitat. Impacts to this activity would be negligible.

The development of utilities could occur as a result of the entire WSA being recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation. However, potential and discretionary management actions may restrict maximum development of utilities consequential to categorization of the WSA's desert tortoise habitat.

All lands within the WSA could remain open to the development of material sites. However, potential and discretionary management actions may restrict the authorization of any new material sites consequential to categorization of the WSA's desert tortoise habitat.

Under the Proposed Action, an estimated total of up to 696 acres of Category I desert tortoise habitat could be lost under full utilization of the WSA for utility development, motorized recreational use and sand and gravel extraction.

#### **All Wilderness Alternative**

All 22,002 acres of public land in the Fish and Wildlife No. 3 WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-9).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Designating the WSA as wilderness would preserve wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities that exist for solitude, and would enhance the protection of desert tortoise and the sensitive plant species. Activities related to the authorized extraction of sand and gravel and unauthorized vehicle use would impair naturalness qualities over approximately 50 acres of the WSA. Special features would be afforded added protection from wilderness designation by the restriction of potential surface disturbing activities.

Motorized recreational use of 60 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the WSA would be unavailable for the development of utilities. Less desirable routes would be utilized by the potential utility users. Full utilization of the existing material site within the WSA could occur.

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, crucial desert tortoise habitat would be preserved within an estimated 99 percent of the WSA. Approximately 50 acres of habitat would be lost to the authorized extraction of sand and gravel and unauthorized off-road vehicle use.

### **LIME CANYON WSA (NV-050-231)**

#### **Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness Alternative)**

The Proposed Action recommends 13,895 acres suitable for wilderness designation and 20,785 acres nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-10).

## CONCLUSIONS

Wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation and the special geological value of Lime Canyon would be retained within 12,905 of the 13,895 acres of the recommended suitable portion. Wilderness values on the remaining 985 acres of the suitable area would be diminished and, in some instances lost, due to the influence of the projected gypsum mining occurring on adjacent public and private lands and occasional unauthorized cross country vehicle use. There would be a loss of wilderness values on the 20,785 acres recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation as continued and increasing cross country recreational vehicle use, projected mineral development, and oil and gas exploration would negatively impact wilderness values.

Exploration and development of gypsum resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA. However, no mineral exploration or development of these lands is projected. The development of two gypsum mines are projected to occur within the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA. There would be no adverse impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the WSA.

Exploration of potential oil and gas resources would be foregone within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA. However, neither is projected to occur. The exploration of one well is projected within the nonsuitable area; production is not expected. There would be no adverse impacts on the exploration of potential energy resources within the WSA under the Proposed Action.

Motorized recreational use would be eliminated on the 13,895 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation and approximately 40 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

### All Wilderness Alternative

All 34,680 acres of public land in the Lime Canyon WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-11).

## CONCLUSIONS

Designation would preserve wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation and the special features that exist within 17,880 of the WSA's 34,680 acres. Approximately 615 acres within the WSA would be physically disturbed by the projected activity associated with authorized mining and unauthorized vehicle use. The scarification of topography and the sights and sounds from heavy equipment associated with the mining would negatively impact the natural perception, outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and the scenic features of Lime Ridge within approximately 16,800 acres of the WSA.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. The development of two mines on valid mining claims is projected to occur within the WSA under the All Wilderness Alternative. As no other mineral exploration or development within the WSA is projected, negative impacts to mineral resources would not occur.

The exploratory drilling of one oil and gas well projected for the WSA would be foregone.

Motorized recreational use of 180 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

### **No Wilderness Alternative (No Action Alternative)**

All 34,680 acres of public land in the Lime Canyon WSA would be recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-12).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

The sights, sounds and surface disturbances created by increased cross country motorized recreational use, projected mineral development and oil and gas exploration would contribute to the loss of wilderness values on 21,765 acres of the WSA. Special features would be afforded some protection through mitigative measures. Wilderness values would be retained within the remaining 12,915 acres of the WSA as no surface disturbing activities are projected to occur.

Mineral resources within the WSA would be available for exploration and development. The development of two mines for gypsum are projected to occur within the WSA. There are no projected adverse impacts on the exploration for and development of mineral resources.

Oil and gas resources within the WSA would be available for exploration. The drilling of one exploratory well is projected to occur within the WSA. There are no projected adverse impacts on the exploration for energy resources.

Motorized recreational use would benefit under the No Wilderness Alternative. No adverse impacts to this use is expected to occur.

### **MILLION HILLS WSA (NV-050-233)**

#### **Proposed Action (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative)**

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 21,296 acre area unsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-13).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

The sights, sounds and surface disturbances created by increased cross country motorized recreational use, projected mineral and oil and gas exploration would contribute to the loss of wilderness values on 12,656 acres of the WSA. Wilderness values are expected to be retained within the remaining 8,640 acres of the WSA as no surface disturbing activities are anticipated. A potential for loss of desert tortoise is anticipated as a result of increased motorized recreational use and oil and gas exploration. However, mitigating actions, such as restricted motorized recreational use, the removal of tortoise prior to surface disturbance, limited construction of access routes, and the reduction of well pads for oil and gas exploration would be implemented.

Mineral resources within the WSA would be available for exploration and development. The exploration of existing mining claims are projected to occur within the WSA. There are no projected adverse impacts on the exploration for and development of mineral resources.

Oil and gas resources within the WSA would be available for exploration. The drilling of two exploratory wells is projected to occur within the WSA. Stringent reclamation measures may be placed on exploration activities consequential to categorization of the WSA's tortoise habitat.

Motorized recreational use could continue within the WSA under the Proposed Action, benefiting the activity. However, potential and discretionary management actions may restrict this use as a result of categorization of the area's tortoise habitat. Impacts to this use would be negligible.

Under the Proposed Action, an estimated total of 20 acres of Category I desert tortoise habitat could be lost under full utilization of the WSA for oil and gas exploration activity and motorized recreational use. However, potential impacts adverse to the habitat could be mitigated through the implementation of management actions.

#### **All Wilderness Alternative**

All 21,296 acres of public land in the Million Hills WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-14).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Designation would preserve wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude, and primitive recreation and the special features of desert tortoise and the scenic features of Azure Ridge that exist within 21,281 of the WSA's 21,296 acres.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. Mineral exploration activity projected to occur without wilderness designation would not occur due to the lack of valid claims if designation occurs. Development of base metal resources is not projected to take place.

The exploratory drilling of two oil and gas wells projected for the WSA would be foregone.

Motorized recreational use of 150 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Designation of the WSA would eliminate the loss of 20 acres and enhance the protection of the 1,800 acres of Category I desert tortoise habitat.

#### **Alternative A (Partial Wilderness Alternative)**

Under this alternative, 11,050 acres of public land would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 10,246 acres of public land would be recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-15).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation and the geologically scenic Azure Ridge, would be retained within 11,045 of the 11,050 acres of the recommended suitable portion. Wilderness values on the remaining 5 acres of the suitable portion would be diminished as a result of unauthorized motorized vehicle use. There would be a loss of wilderness values on the 10,246 acres recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation as continued and increasing cross country motorized recreational use and the projected exploration of oil and gas would negatively impact the area. However, potential adverse impacts to desert tortoise could be mitigated by the implementation of stringent management actions. Special stipulations and restrictions for oil and gas exploration activities could require the removal of tortoise prior to surface disturbance, limited construction of access routes, and the reduction of well pads.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA. Mineral exploration activity projected to occur without wilderness designation would not occur due to the lack of valid claims if designation occurs. Development of base metal resources is not projected to take place within either the recommended suitable or unsuitable areas.

Lands within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA would be unavailable for energy exploration. However, no oil and gas exploration is projected to occur within this portion of the WSA. The drilling of two exploratory wells is projected to occur within the recommended nonsuitable area. Stringent reclamation measures may be placed on exploration activities consequential to categorization of the WSA's tortoise habitat.

Motorized recreational use would be eliminated on the 11,050 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation and approximately 75 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Under Alternative A, an estimated 20 acres of Category I desert tortoise habitat could be lost under full utilization of the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA for oil and gas exploration activity and motorized recreational use.

## **GARRETT BUTTES WSA (NV-050-235)**

### **Proposed Action (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative)**

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 11,835 acre area as nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-16).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude and special features would be diminished and, in some instances, lost due to the sights, sounds and surface disturbances created by continued and the projected increase in motorized recreational use within the WSA. Motorized recreational use would benefit under the Proposed Action. No adverse impacts to this use is expected to occur.

Cross country motorized recreational use occurring within the WSA would negatively impact desert tortoise directly and indirectly through the destruction of burrows and vegetation. This activity would contribute to a decline in the desert tortoise population of the Gold Butte region. Because motorized vehicle use will occur in random unpredictable patterns, no impacted acreage figure is estimated. Monitoring will be used to measure impacts on tortoise populations and to indicate when and where control measures are warranted.

### **All Wilderness Alternative**

All 11,835 acres of public land in the Garrett Buttes WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-17).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Designating the WSA as wilderness would preserve wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities that exist for solitude, and would enhance the protection of desert tortoise.

Motorized recreational use of 180 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Impacts on desert tortoise due to motorized vehicle use would be eliminated.



## **QUAIL SPRINGS WSA (NV-050-411)**

### **Proposed Action (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative)**

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 12,145 acre area as nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-18).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Wilderness values within the WSA would be negatively impacted under the Proposed Action. The projected development of utilities, rail lines, associated access routes, and increased cross country vehicle use would physically disturb an estimated 285 acres within the WSA. The natural perception of the entire WSA would be impaired by the construction of utilities (towers, lines, roads) and rail lines across the landscape. The outstanding opportunities for solitude would be lost due to the sights and sounds created by the aforementioned activities occurring in the WSA. A viable population of desert tortoise would not be maintained within the WSA, as a result of adverse impacts from utility and rail line construction. At least 265 acres of Category II desert tortoise habitat will be lost due to utility and railroad line construction.

Motorized recreational use would benefit under the Proposed Action. No adverse impacts to this use is expected to occur.

The development of utilities could occur as a result of the entire WSA being recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation. No adverse impacts to these uses are expected to occur.

The development of a projected rail line could occur as a result of the entire WSA being recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation. No adverse impacts to these uses are expected to occur.

### **All Wilderness Alternative**

All 12,145 acres of public land in the Quail Springs WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-19).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Designating the WSA as wilderness would preserve wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities that exist for solitude, and would enhance the protection of desert tortoise.

Motorized recreational use of 150 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the WSA would be unavailable for the development of utilities.

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the WSA would be unavailable for the development of a rail line. Less desirable routes would be utilized by the Department of Energy and any other potential users.

## **EL DORADO WSA (NV-050-423)**

### **Proposed Action (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative)**

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 12,290 acre area as unsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-20).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation that exist within 6,600 acres of the WSA would be diminished and, in some instances, lost. The sights, sounds and surface disturbances created by increased motorized recreational use, projected mineral exploration and utility construction and maintenance would adversely impact wilderness values. Wilderness values would be retained within the remaining 5,690 acres of the WSA.

Mineral resources within the WSA would be available for exploration and development. The exploration of existing mining claims is projected to occur within the WSA. There are no projected adverse impacts on the exploration for and development of mineral resources.

Motorized recreational use would benefit under the Proposed Action. No adverse impacts to this use is expected to occur.

The development of an interpretative recreational program would benefit as a result of the entire WSA being recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation. No adverse impacts to this use are expected to occur.

The development of utilities could occur as a result of the entire WSA being recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation. No adverse impacts to these uses are expected to occur.

### **All Wilderness Alternative**

All 12,290 acres of public land in the El Dorado WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-21).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Designation would preserve wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude, and primitive recreation and the identified special features that exist within 12,257 of the WSA's 12,290 acres. Approximately 33 acres within the WSA would be physically disturbed by projected unauthorized vehicle use.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. Mineral exploration activity projected to occur without wilderness designation would not take place due to the lack of valid claims if designation occurs. Development of precious metal resources is not projected to take place.

Motorized recreational use of 550 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. Less desirable race routes would be utilized on adjacent public lands for competitive motorcycle events. The adverse impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be marginal.

The proposed interpretive program could not be fully implemented under the All Wilderness Alternative as interpretive signing would be precluded. Designation of the WSA as wilderness would not adversely affect this program.

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the WSA would be unavailable for the development of utilities.

#### **Alternative A (Partial Wilderness Alternative)**

Under this alternative, 9,570 acres of public land would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 2,720 acres of public land would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-22).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, the two varieties of penstemon and the special geological value of Gregory's Arch would be retained within an estimated 8,970 of the 9,570 acres of the recommended suitable area. Wilderness values on the remaining 600 acres of the suitable portion would be diminished and, in some instances lost, as a result of unauthorized off-road motorized vehicle use, mineral exploration and utility line construction and maintenance projected to occur on adjacent public lands. Wilderness values would be lost on the 2,720 acres recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation as continued and increased cross country motorized vehicle use, projected mineral exploration and construction of utilities would adversely impact the area.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA. Mineral exploration activity projected to occur without wilderness designation would not take place due to lack of valid claims if designation occurs. Exploration of existing mining claims is projected within the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA. There are no projected adverse impacts on the exploration of mineral resources within this area. Development of precious metal resources is not projected to take place within either the recommended suitable or nonsuitable areas.

Motorized recreational use would be eliminated on the 9,570 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation and approximately 280 visits would be foregone annually. Less desirable race routes would be utilized on adjacent public lands for competitive motorcycle events. The adverse impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be marginal.

The proposed interpretive program could not be fully implemented under Alternative A as interpretive signing would be precluded. Designation of the recommended suitable area as wilderness would not adversely affect this program.

Under Alternative A the recommended suitable portion of the WSA would be unavailable for the development of utilities.

### **IRETEBA PEAKS WSA (NV-050-438)**

#### **Proposed Action (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative)**

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 14,994 acre area as nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-23).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Wilderness values of naturalness, and any outstanding opportunities for solitude that exist within 4,800 acres of the WSA would be diminished and, in some instances, lost. The sights, sounds and surface disturbances created by increased motorized recreational use, projected mineral exploration and utility construction and maintenance would negatively impact wilderness values. Wilderness values would be retained within the remaining 10,194 acres of the WSA.

Mineral resources within the WSA would be available for exploration and development. The exploration for precious metals is projected to occur within the WSA. There are no projected adverse impacts on the exploration for and development of mineral resources.

Motorized recreational use would benefit under the Proposed Action. No adverse impacts to this use is expected to occur.

The development of utilities could occur as a result of the entire WSA being recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation. No adverse impacts to this use is expected to occur.

Thirty acres of desert tortoise habitat would be lost as a result of mineral exploration and motorized vehicle use.

#### **All Wilderness Alternative**

All 14,994 acres of public land in the Iretaba Peaks WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-24).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Designation would preserve wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude, and the special features of desert tortoise and sensitive plants that exist within 14,989 of the WSA's 14,994 acres.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. Mineral exploration activity projected to occur without wilderness designation would not take place due to the lack of valid claims if designation occurs. Development of precious metal resources is not projected to take place.

Motorized recreational use of 65 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the WSA would be unavailable for the development of utilities.

#### **Alternative A (Partial Wilderness Alternative)**

Under this alternative, 10,155 acres would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 4,839 acres would be recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-25).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude and the sensitive plant species would be retained within the 10,155 acres of the recommended suitable area. Wilderness values would be lost on the 4,839 acres recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation as continued and increased cross country motorized vehicle use, projected mineral exploration and construction of utilities would negatively impact the area.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA. Mineral exploration is not projected to occur with or without wilderness designation. Exploration for precious metals is projected within the recommended unsuitable portion of the WSA. There are no projected adverse impacts on the exploration of mineral resources within this area. Development of precious metal resources is not projected to take place within either the recommended suitable or unsuitable areas.

Motorized recreational use would be eliminated on the 10,155 acres recommended suitable for

wilderness designation and approximately 15 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

The development of utilities could occur as a result of the recommended nonsuitable area not being designated wilderness. No adverse impacts to this use is expected to occur.

Projected mineral development and vehicle use in the southern portion of the WSA would cause the loss of approximately 30 acres of Category II habitat.

## **JUMBO SPRINGS WSA (NV-050-236)**

### **Proposed Action (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative)**

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 3,466 acre area as nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-26).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

No long-term negative impacts to naturalness qualities would occur within the Jumbo Springs WSA under the Proposed Action.

### **All Wilderness Alternative**

All 3,466 acres of public land in the Jumbo Springs WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-27).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Designation of the Jumbo Springs WSA would preserve the less than outstanding opportunities for solitude and the less than outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. In addition, the naturalness values that exist within the WSA would be retained.

## **NELLIS ABC WSA (NV-050-04R-15)**

### **Proposed Action (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative)**

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 5,718 acre area as nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-28).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Wilderness values within the WSA would be negatively impacted under the Proposed Action. The projected development of utilities, rail lines, associated access routes, and increased cross country vehicle use would physically disturb an estimated 258 acres within the WSA. The natural perception of the entire WSA would be impaired by the construction of utilities (towers, lines, roads) and rail lines across the landscape. The less than outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be lost due to the sights and sounds created by the aforementioned activities occurring in the WSA. A viable population of desert tortoise would not be maintained within the WSA, as a result of adverse impacts from utility and rail line construction.

Motorized recreational use would benefit under the Proposed Action. No adverse impacts to this



use is expected to occur.

The development of utilities could occur as a result of the entire WSA being recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation. No adverse impacts to these uses are expected to occur.

The development of a rail line could occur as a result of the entire WSA being recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation. No adverse impacts to this use is expected to occur.

258 acres of desert tortoise habitat would be lost by development activities. The remaining habitat would be seriously fragmented.

#### **All Wilderness Alternative**

All 5,718 acres of public land in the Nellis ABC WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-29).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Designating the WSA as wilderness would preserve wilderness values of naturalness and would enhance the protection of desert tortoise eliminating the loss of 258 acres of habitat.

Motorized recreational use of 120 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the WSA would be unavailable for the development of utilities.

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the WSA would be unavailable for the development of a rail line. Less desirable routes would be utilized by the Department of Energy and any other potential users.

### **EVERGREEN ABC WSA (NV-050-01R-16)**

#### **Proposed Action (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative)**

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 2,694 acre area as unsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-30).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Utilization of the WSA for the projected development of utilities, motorized recreational vehicle use and extraction of sand and gravel could physically disturb up to an estimated 322 acres. The natural perception of the entire WSA would be impaired by the construction of utilities (towers, lines, roads) across the landscape. The less than outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be further diminished due to the audio and visual distractions from the aforementioned activities occurring in the WSA. A potential for loss of desert tortoise is anticipated as a result of the activities mentioned above. However, the implementation of stringent management actions, such as restricted utility development and motorized recreational use, would provide protection to maintain a viable population.

Motorized recreational use could continue within the WSA under the Proposed Action, benefiting this activity. However, potential and discretionary management actions may restrict this use as a result of categorization of the area's tortoise habitat. Impacts to this activity would be negligible.

The development of utilities could occur as a result of the entire WSA being recommended

nonsuitable for wilderness designation. However, potential and discretionary management actions may restrict maximum development of utilities consequential to categorization of the WSA's desert tortoise habitat. Benefits to potential utility users would be marginal.

All lands within the WSA could remain open to the development of material sites. There would be no impacts on the extraction of materials from the one existing material site.

Under the Proposed Action, an estimated total of 322 acres of crucial desert tortoise habitat could be lost under full utilization of the WSA for utility development, motorized recreational vehicle use and the extraction of sand and gravel. However, potential impacts adverse to the habitat could be mitigated through the implementation of management actions.

#### **All Wilderness Alternative**

All 2,694 acres of public land in the Evergreen ABC WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-31).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Designating the WSA as wilderness would preserve wilderness values of naturalness and would enhance the protection of desert tortoise. Activities related to the authorized extraction of sand and gravel would impair naturalness qualities over approximately 30 acres of the WSA. Desert tortoise would be afforded added protection from wilderness designation by the restriction of potential and existing surface disturbing activities.

Motorized recreational use of 35 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the WSA would be unavailable for the development of utilities.

Development of material sites within the WSA would not be adversely impacted under the All Wilderness Alternative. Full utilization of the existing material site would occur under perpetuity and no other material sites are projected to be developed.

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, crucial desert tortoise habitat would be preserved within an estimated 99 percent of the WSA. Approximately 30 acres of habitat would be lost to the authorized extraction of sand and gravel.

### **LAHONTAN CUTTHROAT TROUT NATURAL AREA (ISA)**

#### **Proposed Action (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative)**

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 12,316 acre area as nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-32).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

The marginal wilderness values of the ISA would be further reduced by the increase in motorized use within the area. The special feature of the Lahontan Cutthroat trout would not be affected. Existing management would continue to protect the trout habitat.

There would be no impact on motorized recreational use.

There would be no negative impact on the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout habitat.

#### **All Wilderness Alternative**

All 12,316 acres of public land in the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout ISA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-33).

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Designation of the ISA as wilderness would benefit the values of naturalness and solitude by the preclusion of off-road, cross country travel within the ISA. However, overall wilderness values would remain low. The special feature of the Lahontan Cutthroat trout would be preserved.

The impacts to motorized recreational use would be negligible, eliminating less than 10 percent of the existing use.

There would be no impact to the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout habitat from the designation of the ISA as wilderness.



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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION AND PLANNING PROCESS

### PURPOSE

The purpose of the Proposed Action in two of the wilderness study areas (WSAs) examined in this EIS, as the Wilderness Act states, "is to secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness." In 12 of the WSAs the purpose is to manage for uses other than wilderness. This document analyzes the potential impacts of designating or not designating as wilderness all or portions of 13 WSAs and one Instant Study Area in Clark, Lincoln, White Pine, and Humboldt Counties, Nevada. The Proposed Action represents the BLM's preliminary recommendations for these 13 WSAs and one Instant Study Area as they were developed through the Bureau planning system.

### NEED

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) directs the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to manage the public lands and their resources under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. Section 603 of FLPMA requires a wilderness review of BLM roadless areas containing 5,000 or more acres and roadless islands; and the reporting of recommendations on those areas formally identified as primitive or natural areas (Instant Study Areas). The BLM Inventory process identified WSAs which have the mandatory wilderness characteristics of size, naturalness, and opportunities for solitude and/or primitive recreation under Section 603 of FLPMA (lands containing 5,000 acres) and Section 202 of FLPMA (lands containing less than 5,000 acres). Suitable or unsuitable wilderness recommendations for each WSA will be presented to the President by the Secretary of the Interior. The President will then make recommendations to the Congress. Areas can be designated wilderness only by an act of Congress. If designated as wilderness, an area would be managed in accordance with the Wilderness Act of 1964 and the Bureau's Wilderness Management Policy.

The 13 WSAs and one ISA being studied are listed in Table 1-1. The WSAs and ISA are located in the BLM's Stateline and Callente Resource Areas of the Las Vegas District; the Schell Resource Area of the Ely District; and the Sonoma-Gerlach and Paradise-Denio Resource Areas of the Winnemucca District. The Location Map shows the relative location of the planning areas in relation to the State of Nevada.

### WILDERNESS REVIEW INVENTORY

The Inventory phase identified areas with wilderness characteristics, as defined in the Wilderness Act of 1964, and designated them as WSAs. Guidelines for conducting the inventory phase were set forth primarily in the BLM's "Wilderness Inventory Handbook" of 1978.

Areas under consideration as wilderness were evaluated for the features described below:

### WILDERNESS VALUES

The following key factors were considered when roadless areas with wilderness characteristics were identified:

**Size:** The area must have at least 5,000 contiguous roadless acres of public land.

**Naturalness:** Human imprints must be substantially unnoticeable.

**Outstanding Opportunities:** The area must offer either an outstanding opportunity for solitude or an outstanding opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation.

- 
1. LAHONTAN ISA
  2. MARBLE CANYON NV-040-086
  3. EVERGREEN NV-050-01R-  
16A,16B,16C
  4. NELLIS NV-050-04R-15A,15B,15C
  5. FISH & WILDLIFE #1 NV-050-201
  6. FISH & WILDLIFE #2 NV-050-216
  7. FISH & WILDLIFE #3 NV-050-217
  8. LIME CANYON NV-050-231
  9. MILLION HILLS NV-050-233
  10. GARRETT BUTTES NV-050-235
  11. JUMBO SPRINGS NV-050-236
  12. QUAIL SPRINGS NV-050-411
  13. EL DORADO NV-050-423
  14. IRETEBA PEAKS NV-050-438

A, B and C refers to Map 1-2 following this page.

**MAP 1-1**  
**WILDERNESS STUDY AREA**  
**LOCATION MAP**



Red areas refer  
to numbered WSAs  
on Map 1-1.

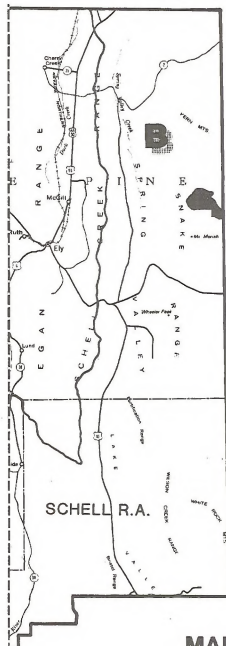
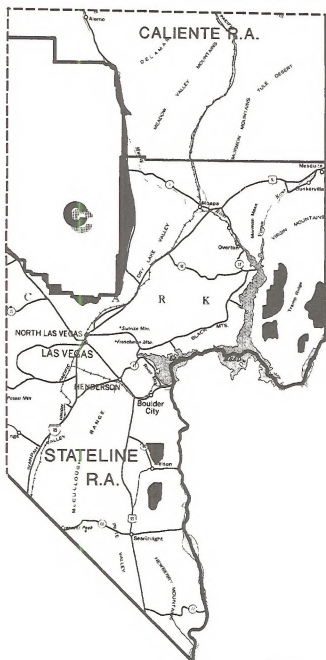
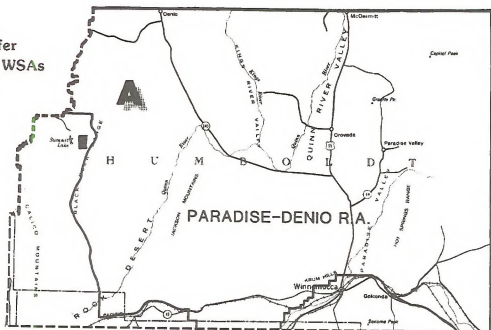


TABLE 1-1  
LISTING OF WSAS AND ISA

WSA Name	Management Framework Plan	Acreage	District
Marble Canyon (NV040-086) (formerly Granite Spgs.)	Schell	19,150	Ely
Fish & Wildlife No. 1 (NV050-201)	Clark/ Caliente	11,090	Las Vegas
Fish & Wildlife No. 2 (NV050-216)	Clark	17,242	Las Vegas
Fish & Wildlife No. 3 (NV050-217)	Clark	22,002	Las Vegas
Lime Canyon (NV050-231)	Clark	34,680	Las Vegas
Million Hills (NV050-233)	Clark	21,296	Las Vegas
Garrett Buttes (NV050-235)	Clark	11,835	Las Vegas
Quail Springs (NV050-411)	Clark	12,145	Las Vegas
El Dorado (NV050-423)	Clark	12,290	Las Vegas
Iretea Peaks (NV050-438)	Clark	14,994	Las Vegas
Jumbo Springs (NV050-236)	Clark	3,466 a/	Las Vegas
Nellis ABC (NV050-04R-15)	Clark	5,718 a/	Las Vegas
Evergreen ABC (NV050-01R-16)	Caliente	2,694 a/	Las Vegas
Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Natural Area (ISA)	Sonoma-Gerlach Paradise-Denio	12,316	Winnemucca
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>200,918 Acres</b>	

a/ 202s- Each area is divided into subunit's of less than 5,000 acres. The areas do not meet the 5,000 acre size criteria (continuous roadless lands) under Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA). These WSAs qualify under Section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.

During wilderness inventory, the BLM also considered the extent to which each of the following wilderness values was present:

**Special Features:** Ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic or historical value.

**Multiple Resource Benefits:** The benefits to other multiple resource values and uses that only wilderness designation could ensure.

## STUDY

During the study phase, the BLM determined through careful analysis which study areas would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation and which would not. Recommendations for the 14 areas being studied for wilderness were made through the BLM's multiple use resource planning process. The BLM's planning regulations and its final wilderness study policy guided the study process.

## REPORTING

The reporting phase begins after completion of the final environmental impact statement (FEIS). A wilderness study report (WSR) is prepared to address the results of the study and make preliminary recommendations as to the designation or nondesignation of each WSA and ISA.

Recommendations for the WSAs and the ISA as suitable or unsuitable for designation as wilderness will be reported through the Director of the BLM to the Secretary of the Interior, and through the Secretary of the Interior to the President, who will make his recommendation to Congress. Only Congress can designate an area as wilderness.

## INTERIM MANAGEMENT

Until Congress acts, the BLM's *Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands Under Wilderness Review* (1979; rev. 1983, 1987) serves as the principal document for managing the 13 WSAs and one ISA in the Clark, Caliente, Schell, Sonoma-Gerlach and Paradise-Denio Resource Areas. The goal of the interim management policy is to ensure that the wilderness qualities inherent to each WSA are unchanged at the time that Congress makes its final decisions.

## CHANGES FROM DRAFT EIS TO FINAL EIS

As a result of public comments received on the draft EIS and actions by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, several changes occur within the Final EIS.

On August 4, 1989 the desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) was emergency listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The impacts to desert tortoise, desert tortoise habitat and proposed actions within desert tortoise habitat were re-analyzed and expanded throughout the document. Proposed actions have been modified and mitigating measures listed.

A commentor stated that the motorized recreational use projected to occur within those WSAs located in the Gold Butte area (Lime Canyon, Million Hills and Garrett Butte) and the Iteba Peaks WSA were highly inflated. The projections for the El Dorado WSA were felt to be somewhat low. Therefore, motorized visitor use projections were adjusted for these WSAs. The adjusted projections are reflected in Chapters 2, 3, and 4.

Impacts to motorized recreational use under the All Wilderness Alternative were reassessed for the El Dorado WSA as a result of public comment. The commentor stated that the impacts of shifting use from the western portion of the El Dorado WSA would be significant to motorcycle racing in southern Nevada. The changes reflecting this statement are addressed under the "Impacts on Motorized Recreational Use" section in Chapter 4 - Environmental Consequences.

Two desert bighorn sheep water developments have been proposed within the Fish and Wildlife No. 2 WSA.

This proposal has been addressed in the document within Chapters 2, 3, and 4.

## SCOPING AND ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

The scoping process for the Nevada Contiguous Lands Wilderness EIS encompassed issues identified by BLM staff and by the public during a formal scoping comment period on issue identification in Reno, Las Vegas and Ely (August 1987). The following is a list of environmental issues identified for analysis in the EIS for the WSAs. (See Table 1-2).

Table 1-2  
Issue Identification

WSA	Impacts on Wilderness Values	Impacts on Exp. & Dev. of Mineral Resources	Impacts on Existing Material Site Rights-of-way	Impacts on Exp. for Oil and Gas	Impacts on Levels of Motorized Recreation Use
Marble Canyon	X	X			
Fish & Wildlife #1	X	X	X		X
Fish & Wildlife #2	X				X
Fish & Wildlife #3	X		X		X
Lime Canyon	X	X		X	X
Million Hills	X	X		X	X
Garrett Buttes	X				X
Quail Springs	X				X
El Dorado	X	X			X
Iretaba Peaks	X	X			X
Jumbo Springs	X				
Nellis ABC	X				X
Evergreen ABC	X		X		X
Lahontan ISA	X				X

Table 1-2 Continued

## Issue Identification

WSA	Impacts on Recreation Management	Impacts on Livestock Developments and Maintenance	Impacts on Utility Line Development	Impacts on Railroad Line Development	Impacts on Threatened & Endangered Species/ Desert Tortoise & LCT Habitat
Marble Canyon			X		
Fish & Wildlife #1			X		X
Fish & Wildlife #2			X		X
Fish & Wildlife #3			X		X
Lime Canyon					X
Millon Hills					X
Garrett Buttes					X
Quail Springs			X	X	X
El Dorado	X		X		X
Iretaba Peaks			X		X
Jumbo Springs					X
Nellis ABC			X	X	X
Evergreen ABC			X		X
Lahontan ISA					X

## MARBLE CANYON WSA

The following issues were selected for detailed analysis.

**1. Impacts on Wilderness Values.** The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness.

**2. Impacts on Exploration for and Development of Non-Energy Mineral Resources.** Wilderness designation could affect the exploration and development of potential and known mineral resources by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. Development of existing mineral resources within designated wilderness areas could be affected by wilderness management restrictions.

**3. Impacts on Livestock Developments and Maintenance Activities.** Wilderness designation could affect grazing management operations by precluding the construction of water developments and the use of motorized vehicles.

The following issues were identified in scoping but were not selected for detailed analysis for this WSA. The reasons for setting aside each of the issues are discussed below:

**4. Impacts on the Levels of Motorized Recreational Use.** Upon close examination, levels of motorized recreational use in the Marble Canyon WSA were determined not to be significant enough to be analyzed in the EIS. The area is either too rugged for motorized vehicle access or it does not offer exceptional opportunities to warrant motorized recreational use.

**5. Impacts on Military Overflights.** Concerns were raised by the U.S. Air Force as to what affect wilderness designation would have on low-level military flights over the WSA. The Wilderness Management Policy states "Where low (military) overflight is a problem, or expected to become a problem, wilderness management plans will provide for liaison with proper military authorities, the Federal Aviation Administration, and contact with pilots in the general area in an effort to reduce low flight."

**6. Impacts on Cultural Resources.** Cultural resources have been identified within the WSA. The WSA does not possess any prehistoric or historic resources that are currently listed or proposed for nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. It is not expected that impacts to cultural resources within the area, occurring from casual or unregulated uses would vary as a result of wilderness designation or nondesignation.

In addition, prior to any surface-disturbing activity such as mineral and seismic exploration, range improvement development or wildlife developments, etc., a cultural resource inventory is required. For any cultural resources identified during the inventory, mitigating measures would be proposed to preserve the scientific information and/or lessen the physical impacts. The consideration given to cultural resources is in accord with Bureau responsibilities toward Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (36 CFR 800), to identify those properties which are eligible or potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Bureau policy is to protect, manage, and avoid inadvertent loss of cultural resources (BLM Manual 8100.06). The framework for this policy is encompassed by a body of surface protection and antiquities legislation. Thus under any alternative, impacts to cultural resources would be approximately the same and these cultural resources would be protected and managed in accordance with Bureau guidelines and legislative mandates.

**7. Impacts on Reintroduction and Management of Bighorn Sheep and Antelope.** Management of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep and antelope and the construction and maintenance of water developments were concerns identified during scoping. The Wilderness Management Policy

provides for both the re-establishment of native species, management of current populations and the development of waters. Although there may be some restrictions placed on the way waters are developed and subsequent maintenance activities as a result of wilderness designation, such restrictions would not significantly affect management and water development activities.

**8. Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species.** Wildlife and vegetation inventories did not identify any listed threatened or endangered species within the WSA. Notification of Scoping was sent to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and no additional information was received regarding this issue.

**9. Impacts on Water Sources.** Within the WSA, water sources are extremely limited and consist of two developed seeps. The issue of how water quality and quantity would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation within the areas will not be considered for this WSA. The impacts of existing or projected activities, such as mineral exploration and development, on the quality and quantity of water sources would be negligible.

## **FISH AND WILDLIFE NO. 1 WSA**

The following issues were selected for detailed analysis.

**1. Impacts on Wilderness Values.** The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness.

**2. Impacts on Exploration for and Development of Non-Energy Mineral Resources.** Wilderness designation could effect the exploration and development of potential and known mineral resources by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. Development of existing mineral resources within designated wilderness areas could be affected by wilderness management restrictions.

**3. Impacts on Levels of Motorized Recreational Use.** Wilderness designation would eliminate the cross country, off-road use of motorized vehicles for hunting, trapping, and rocks and mineral collecting access, and off-road driving in the WSA. Eliminating this use would shift motorized recreational uses currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands.

**4. Impacts on Development of Utilities.** Wilderness designation could affect the use of land for utility corridors. The route along Highway 93 is the natural course for north-south interregional utilities which tie into the Navajo-McCullough Substation, Las Vegas or the Hoover Dam facilities, and has received considerable attention from potential users and land managers. The Fish and Wildlife No. 1 WSA lies astride this route. To the west and east, other WSAs, the Desert National Game Range and topography severely restrict alternative routes through or to southern Nevada.

**5. Impacts on Existing Material Site Rights-of-way.** Wilderness designation could affect usage (extraction of sand and gravel) of two material site rights-of-way granted in perpetuity by BLM to the Nevada Department of Transportation.

**6. Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise.** The desert tortoise has been emergency listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Fish and Wildlife No. 1 WSA contains Category 1 tortoise habitat. Desert tortoise and their habitat could benefit from wilderness designation or be impacted by surface disturbing actions if the WSA is not designated as wilderness.

The following issues were identified in scoping but were not selected for detailed analysis for this WSA. The reasons for setting aside each of the issues are discussed below:



**7. Impacts on Military Overflights.** Concerns were raised by the U.S. Air Force as to what affect wilderness designation would have on low-level military flights over the WSA. The Wilderness Management Policy states "Where low (military) overflight is a problem, or expected to become a problem, wilderness management plans will provide for liaison with proper military authorities, the Federal Aviation Administration, and contact with pilots in the general area in an effort to reduce low flight."

**8. Impacts on Cultural Resources.** The WSA does not possess prehistoric or historic resources that are currently listed or proposed for nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. No cultural sites have been recorded within the WSA. It is not expected that impacts to any unidentified cultural resources within the area occurring from casual or unregulated uses would vary as a result of wilderness designation or nondesignation.

In addition, prior to approval of any surface-disturbing activity such as a mining plan of operation, application to drill, seismic exploration, utility development or range improvement development, etc., BLM requires completion of a cultural resource inventory. For any cultural resources identified during the inventory, mitigating measures such as avoidance, salvage collection, formal study, excavation, etc., would be proposed and implemented to preserve the scientific information and/or lessen the physical impacts. The consideration given to cultural resources is in accord with Bureau responsibilities toward Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (36 CFR 800), to identify those properties which are eligible or potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Bureau policy is to protect, manage, and avoid inadvertent loss of cultural resources (BLM Manual 8100.06). The framework for this policy is encompassed by a body of surface protection and antiquities legislation. Thus under any alternative, impacts to cultural resources would be approximately the same and these cultural resources would be protected and managed in accordance with Bureau guidelines and legislative mandates.

**9. Impacts on Water Sources.** Within the WSA, possible water sources consist of two abandoned wells. Therefore, the issue of how water quality and quantity would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation within the area will not be considered for this WSA.

**10. Impacts on Livestock Developments and Maintenance Activities.** Concerns were raised that livestock operators would not be able to maintain their grazing facilities or construct planned range projects. No range projects exist within the WSA and none are proposed.

## **FISH AND WILDLIFE NO. 2**

The following issues were selected for detailed analysis.

**1. Impacts on Wilderness Values.** The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness.

**2. Impacts on Levels of Motorized Recreational Use.** Wilderness designation would eliminate the cross country, off-road use of motorized vehicles for hunting, trapping, rock and mineral collecting access and vehicle camping in the WSA. Eliminating this use would shift motorized recreational uses currently occurring in the WSAs to adjacent lands.

**3. Impacts on Development of Utilities.** Wilderness designation could affect the use of land for utility corridors. The route along Highway 93 is the natural course for north-south interregional utilities which tie into the Navajo-McCullough Substation, Las Vegas, or the Hoover Dam facilities and has received considerable attention from potential users and land managers. The Fish and Wildlife No. 2 WSA lies astride this route from Highway 93, westerly. To the west and east, other WSAs, the Desert National Game Range and topography severely restrict alternative routes through

or to southern Nevada.

**4. Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise.** The desert tortoise has been emergency listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Fish and Wildlife No. 2 WSA contains Category 1 tortoise habitat. Desert tortoise and their habitat could benefit from wilderness designation or be impacted by surface disturbing actions if the WSA is not designated as wilderness.

The following issues were identified in scoping but were not selected for detailed analysis for this WSA. The reasons for setting aside each of the issues are discussed below:

**5. Impacts on Exploration for and Development of Non-Energy Mineral Resources.** Wilderness designation could effect the exploration and development of potential and known mineral resources by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. However, no exploration or development of mineral resources is projected to occur within the WSA.

**6. Impacts on Military Overflights.** Concerns were raised by the U.S. Air Force as to what affect wilderness designation would have on low-level military flights over the WSA. The **Wilderness Management Policy** states "Where low (military) overflight is a problem, or expected to become a problem, wilderness management plans will provide for liaison with proper military authorities, the Federal Aviation Administration, and contact with pilots in the general area in an effort to reduce low flight."

**7. Impacts on Cultural Resources.** Cultural resources have been identified within the WSA. The WSA does not possess any prehistoric or historic resources that are currently listed or proposed for nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. It is not expected that impacts to cultural resources within the area, occurring from casual or unregulated uses would vary as a result of wilderness designation or nondesignation.

In addition, prior to approval of any surface-disturbing activity such as a mining plan of operation, application to drill, seismic exploration, utility development or range improvement development, etc., BLM requires completion of a cultural resource inventory. For any cultural resources identified during the inventory, mitigating measures such as avoidance, salvage collection, formal study, excavation, etc., would be proposed and implemented to preserve the scientific information and/or lessen the physical impacts. The consideration given to cultural resources is in accord with Bureau responsibilities toward Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (36 CFR 800), to identify those properties which are eligible or potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Bureau policy is to protect, manage, and avoid inadvertent loss of cultural resources (BLM Manual 8100.06). The framework for this policy is encompassed by a body of surface protection and antiquities legislation. Thus under any alternative, impacts to cultural resources would be approximately the same and these cultural resources would be protected and managed in accordance with Bureau guidelines and legislative mandates.

**8. Impacts on Reintroduction and Management of Bighorn Sheep.** Management of Desert bighorn sheep and the construction and maintenance of water developments were concerns identified during scoping. The **Wilderness Management Policy** provides for both the re-establishment of native species, management of current populations and the development of waters. Although there may be some restrictions placed on the way waters are developed and subsequent maintenance activities as a result of wilderness designation, such restrictions would not significantly affect management, re-establishment and water development activities.

**9. Impacts on Water Sources.** Within the WSA, no water sources have been identified. Therefore, the issue of how water quality and quantity would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation within the area will not be considered for this WSA.

10. **Impacts on Livestock Development and Maintenance Activities.** Concerns were raised that livestock operators would not be able to maintain their grazing facilities or construct planned range projects. However, no range projects exist within or are proposed for the WSA.

### **FISH AND WILDLIFE NO. 3**

The following issues were selected for detailed analysis.

1. **Impacts on Wilderness Values.** The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness.

2. **Impacts on Levels of Motorized Recreational Use.** Wilderness designation would eliminate the cross country, off-road use of motorized vehicles for hunting, trapping, rocks and minerals collecting access, racing, vehicle camping and off-road driving in the WSA. Eliminating this use would shift motorized recreational uses currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands.

3. **Impacts on Development of Utilities.** Wilderness designation could affect the use of land for utility corridors. The route along Highway 93 is the natural course for north-south interregional utilities which tie into the Navajo-McCullough Substation, Las Vegas, or the Hoover Dam facilities and has received considerable attention from potential users and land managers. The Fish and Wildlife No. 3 WSA lies astride this route from Highway 93, westerly. To the west and east, other WSAs, the Desert National Game Range and topography severely restrict alternative routes through or to southern Nevada.

4. **Impacts on Existing Material Site Right-of-way.** Wilderness designation could affect usage (extraction of sand and gravel) of one material site right-of-way granted in perpetuity by BLM to the Nevada Department of Transportation.

5. **Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise.** The desert tortoise has been emergency listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Fish and Wildlife No. 3 WSA contains Category 1 tortoise habitat. Desert tortoise and their habitat could benefit from wilderness designation or be impacted by surface disturbing actions if the WSA is not designated as wilderness.

The following issues were identified in scoping but were not selected for detailed analysis for this WSA. The reasons for setting aside each of the issues are discussed below:

6. **Impacts on Exploration for and Development of Non-Energy Mineral Resources.** Wilderness designation could effect the exploration and development of mineral resources by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. However, no exploration or development of known or potential mineral resources is projected to occur within the WSA.

7. **Impacts on Military Overflights.** Concerns were raised by the U.S. Air Force as to what affect wilderness designation would have on low-level military flights over the WSA. The Wilderness Management Policy states "Where low (military) overflight is a problem, or expected to become a problem, wilderness management plans will provide for liaison with proper military authorities, the Federal Aviation Administration, and contact with pilots in the general area in an effort to reduce low flight."

8. **Impacts on Cultural Resources.** Cultural resources have been identified within the WSA. The WSA does not possess any prehistoric or historic resources that are currently listed or proposed for nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. It is not expected that impacts to

cultural resources within the area, occurring from casual or unregulated uses would vary as a result of wilderness designation or nondesignation.

In addition, prior to approval of any surface-disturbing activity such as a mining plan of operation, application to drill, seismic exploration, utility development or range improvement development, etc., BLM requires completion of a cultural resource inventory. For any cultural resources identified during the inventory, mitigating measures such as avoidance, salvage collection, formal study, excavation, etc., would be proposed and implemented to preserve the scientific information and/or lessen the physical impacts. The consideration given to cultural is in accord with Bureau responsibilities toward Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (36 CFR 800), to identify those properties which are eligible or potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Bureau policy is to protect, manage, and avoid inadvertent loss of cultural resources (BLM Manual 8100.06). The framework for this policy is encompassed by a body of surface protection and antiquities legislation. Thus under any alternative, impacts to cultural resources would be approximately the same and these cultural resources would be protected and managed in accordance with Bureau guidelines and legislative mandates.

**9. Impacts on Reintroduction and Management of Bighorn Sheep.** Management of Desert bighorn sheep and the construction and maintenance of water developments were concerns identified during scoping. The Wilderness Management Policy provides for both the re-establishment of native species, management of current populations and the development of waters. Although there may be some restrictions placed on the way waters are developed and subsequent maintenance activities as a result of wilderness designation, such restrictions would not significantly affect management, re-establishment and water development activities.

**10. Impacts on Water Sources.** Within the WSA, water sources are extremely limited and consist of two abandoned wells. The issue of how water quality and quantity would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation within the areas will not be considered for this WSA.

**11. Impacts on Livestock Development and Maintenance Activities.** Concerns were raised that livestock operators would not be able to maintain their grazing facilities or construct planned range projects. No range projects exist within or are proposed for the WSA.

## **LIME CANYON**

The following issues were selected for detailed analysis.

**1. Impacts on Wilderness Values.** The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness. In addition, those uses and actions occurring on or projected to take place on those private lands located within the borders of the WSA, may adversely effect their wilderness values.

**2. Impacts on Exploration for and Development of Non-Energy Mineral Resources.** Wilderness designation could effect the exploration and development of potential and known mineral resources by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. Development of existing mineral resources within designated wilderness areas could be affected by wilderness management restrictions.

**3. Impacts on the Level of Exploration for Oil and Gas.** Wilderness designation could effect exploration for potential oil and gas resources by withdrawing designated lands from energy leasing.

**4. Impacts on Levels of Motorized Recreational Use.** Wilderness designation would eliminate the cross country, off-road use of motorized vehicles for hunting, trapping, rocks and mineral



access, vehicle camping and off-road driving in the WSA. Eliminating this use would shift motorized recreational uses currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands.

**5. Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise.** The desert tortoise has been emergency listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Lime Canyon WSA contains uncategorized tortoise habitat. If desert tortoise occur in this WSA, they and their habitat could benefit from wilderness designation or be impacted by surface disturbing actions if the WSA is not designated as wilderness.

The following issues were identified in scoping but were not selected for detailed analysis for this WSA. The reasons for setting aside each of the issues are discussed below:

**6. Impacts on Cultural Resources.** The WSA does not possess prehistoric or historic resources that are currently listed or proposed for nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. No cultural sites have been recorded within the WSA. It is not expected that impacts to any unidentified cultural resources within the area, occurring from casual or unregulated uses would vary as a result of wilderness designation or nondesignation.

In addition, prior to approval of any surface-disturbing activity such as a mining plan of operation, application to drill, seismic exploration, utility development or range improvement development, etc., BLM requires completion of a cultural resource inventory. For any cultural resources identified during the inventory, mitigating measures such as avoidance, salvage collection, formal study, excavation, etc., would be proposed and implemented to preserve the scientific information and/or lessen the physical impacts. The consideration given to cultural resources is in accord with Bureau responsibilities toward Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (36 CFR 800), to identify those properties which are eligible or potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Bureau policy is to protect, manage, and avoid inadvertent loss of cultural resources (BLM Manual 8100.06). The framework for this policy is encompassed by a body of surface protection and antiquities legislation. Thus under any alternative, impacts to cultural resources would be approximately the same and these cultural resources would be protected and managed in accordance with Bureau guidelines and legislative mandates.

**7. Impacts on Reintroduction and Management of Bighorn Sheep.** Management of Desert bighorn sheep and the construction and maintenance of water developments were concerns identified during scoping. The Wilderness Management Policy provides for both the re-establishment of native species, management of current populations and the development of waters. Although there may be some restrictions placed on the way waters are developed and subsequent maintenance activities as a result of wilderness designation, such restrictions would not significantly affect management, re-establishment and water development activities.

**8. Impacts on Water Sources.** Within the WSA, water sources are extremely limited and consist of a developed spring. The issue of how water quality and quantity would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation within the areas will not be considered for this WSA.

**9. Impacts on Livestock Developments and Maintenance Activities.** Concerns were raised that livestock operators would not be able to maintain their grazing facilities or construct planned range projects. This issue was considered but dropped from detailed analysis because the BLM's Wilderness Management Policy provides for the continued maintenance of grazing facilities and the construction of planned range projects.

The maintenance of two existing fence lines, one developed spring and a small earthen reservoir would continue within the WSA subject to reasonable controls and restrictions. Restrictions and controls would be placed on the use of motor vehicles, motorized equipment and mechanical transport.

**10. Impacts on Private Inholdings.** The impact of wilderness designation or nondesignation on private land inholdings in the WSA (838 acres) was considered as an issue but dropped from detailed analysis. BLM's Wilderness Management Policy provides for adequate access to non-federal lands completely surrounded by a wilderness area. Such access would be a combination of routes and modes of travel which will cause the least lasting impact on the wilderness resource and, at the same time, serve the reasonable purposes for which the non-federal lands are held or used. Presently, a permanent access route does not exist through the WSA to the 838 acre private inholding. Development of access is projected for the three separate parcels of private inholdings located within the WSA.

## **MILLION HILLS WSA**

The following issues were selected for detailed analysis.

**1. Impacts on Wilderness Values.** The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness.

**2. Impacts on Exploration for and Development of Non-Energy Mineral Resources.** Wilderness designation could effect the exploration and development of potential and known mineral resources by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. Development of existing mineral resources within designated wilderness areas could be affected by wilderness management restrictions.

**3. Impacts on the Level of Exploration for Oil and Gas.** Wilderness designation could effect exploration for potential oil and gas resources by withdrawing designated lands from energy leasing.

**4. Impacts on Levels of Motorized Recreational Use.** Wilderness designation would eliminate the cross country, off-road use of motorized vehicles for hunting, trapping, rock and mineral access, vehicle camping, and off-road driving in the WSA. Eliminating this use would shift motorized recreational uses currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands.

**5. Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise.** The desert tortoise has been emergency listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Million Hills WSA contains both Category 1 and uncategorized tortoise habitat. Desert tortoise and their habitat could benefit from wilderness designation or be impacted by surface disturbing actions if the WSA is not designated wilderness.

The following issues were identified in scoping but were not selected for detailed analysis for this WSA. The reasons for setting aside each of the issues are discussed below:

**6. Impacts on Cultural Resources.** The WSA does not possess prehistoric or historic resources that are currently listed or proposed for nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. No cultural sites have been recorded within the WSA. It is not expected that impacts to any unidentified cultural resources within the area, occurring from casual or unregulated uses would vary as a result of wilderness designation or nondesignation.

In addition, prior to approval of any surface-disturbing activity such as a mining plan of operation, application to drill, seismic exploration, utility development or range improvement development, etc., BLM requires completion of a cultural resource inventory. For any cultural resources identified during the inventory, mitigating measures such as avoidance, salvage collection, formal study, excavation, etc., would be proposed and implemented to preserve the scientific information and/or lessen the physical impacts. The consideration given to cultural resources is in accord with Bureau responsibilities toward Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (36 CFR 800), to identify those properties which are eligible or potentially eligible for inclusion in the National

Register of Historic Places. Bureau policy is to protect, manage, and avoid inadvertent loss of cultural resources (BLM Manual 8100.06). The framework for this policy is encompassed by a body of surface protection and antiquities legislation. Thus under any alternative, impacts to cultural resources would be approximately the same and these cultural resources would be protected and managed in accordance with Bureau guidelines and legislative mandates.

**7. Impacts on Reintroduction and Management of Bighorn Sheep.** Management of Desert bighorn sheep and the construction and maintenance of water developments were concerns identified during scoping. The Wilderness Management Policy provides for both the re-establishment of native species, management of current populations and the development of waters. Although there may be some restrictions placed on the way waters are developed and subsequent maintenance activities as a result of wilderness designation, such restrictions would not significantly affect management, re-establishment and water development activities.

**8. Impacts on Water Sources.** Within the WSA, water sources are extremely limited and consist of two developed and one undeveloped springs. The issue of how water quality and quantity would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation within the areas will not be considered for this WSA. There were no existing or projected activities that were found to adversely impact the quality and quantity of the water sources.

**9. Impacts on Livestock Developments and Maintenance Activities.** Concerns were raised that livestock operators would not be able to maintain their grazing facilities or construct planned range projects. This issue was considered but dropped from detailed analysis because the BLM's Wilderness Management Policy provides for the continued maintenance of grazing facilities and the construction of planned range projects. The maintenance of two existing fencelines and two developed springs would continue within the WSA subject to reasonable controls and restrictions. Restrictions and controls would be placed on the use of motor vehicles, motorized equipment and mechanical transport.

## **GARRETT BUTTES WSA**

The following issues were selected for detailed analysis.

**1. Impacts on Wilderness Values.** The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness.

**2. Impacts on Levels of Motorized Recreational Use.** Wilderness designation would eliminate the cross country, off-road use of motorized vehicles for hunting and trapping access, vehicle camping and off-road driving in the WSA. Eliminating this use would shift motorized recreational uses currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands.

**3. Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise.** The desert tortoise has been emergency listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Garrett Buttes WSA contains uncategorized tortoise habitat. If desert tortoise occur in this WSA, they and their habitat could benefit from wilderness designation or be impacted by surface disturbing actions if the WSA is not designated as wilderness.

The following issues were identified in scoping but were not selected for detailed analysis for this WSA. The reasons for setting aside each of the issues are discussed below:

**4. Impacts on Exploration for and Development of Non-Energy Mineral Resources.** Wilderness designation could effect the exploration and development of mineral resources by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. However, no exploration or development of known or potential



mineral resources is projected to occur within the WSA.

**5. Impacts on Cultural Resources.** The WSA does not possess prehistoric or historic resources that are currently listed or proposed for nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. No cultural sites have been recorded within the WSA. It is not expected that impacts to any unidentified cultural resources within the area, occurring from casual or unregulated uses would vary as a result of wilderness designation or nondesignation.

In addition, prior to approval of any surface-disturbing activity such as a mining plan of operation, application to drill, seismic exploration, utility development or range improvement development, etc., BLM requires completion of a cultural resource inventory. For any cultural resources identified during the inventory, mitigating measures such as avoidance, salvage collection, formal study, excavation, etc., would be proposed and implemented to preserve the scientific information and/or lessen the physical impacts. The consideration given to cultural resources is in accord with Bureau responsibilities toward Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (36 CFR 800), to identify those properties which are eligible or potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Bureau policy is to protect, manage, and avoid inadvertent loss of cultural resources (BLM Manual 8100.06). The framework for this policy is encompassed by a body of surface protection and antiquities legislation. Thus under any alternative, impacts to cultural resources would be approximately the same and these cultural resources would be protected and managed in accordance with Bureau guidelines and legislative mandates.

**6. Impacts on Reintroduction and Management of Bighorn Sheep.** Management of Desert bighorn sheep and the construction and maintenance of water developments were concerns identified during scoping. The **Wilderness Management Policy** provides for both the re-establishment of native species, management of current populations and the development of waters. Although there may be some restrictions placed on the way waters are developed and subsequent maintenance activities as a result of wilderness designation, such restrictions would not significantly affect management, re-establishment and water development activities.

**7. Impacts on Water Sources.** Within the WSA, water sources are extremely limited and consist of five developed seeps and springs. The issue of how water quality and quantity would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation within the areas will not be considered for this WSA. There were no existing or projected activities that were found to adversely impact the quality and quantity of the water sources.

**8. Impacts on Livestock Developments and Maintenance Activities.** Concerns were raised that livestock operators would not be able to maintain their grazing facilities or construct planned range projects. This issue was considered but dropped from detailed analysis because the BLM's **Wilderness Management Policy** provides for the continued maintenance of grazing facilities and the construction of planned range projects. The construction of a proposed fence line and the maintenance of five existing developed springs would continue within the WSA subject to reasonable controls and restrictions. Restrictions and controls would be placed on facility design, location and materials; and the use of motor vehicles, motorized equipment and mechanical transport.

## **QUAIL SPRINGS WSA**

The following issues were selected for detailed analysis.

**1. Impacts on Wilderness Values.** The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness.

**2. Impacts on Levels of Motorized Recreational Use.** Wilderness designation would eliminate

the cross country, off-road use of motorized vehicles for hunting and trapping access and off-road driving in the WSA. Eliminating this use would shift motorized recreational uses currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands.

**3. Impacts on Development of Utilities.** Wilderness designation could affect the use of land for utility corridors. A route paralleling Highway 95 is the natural course for southeast-northwest utilities between the Nevada Test Site and Las Vegas and has received considerable attention from potential users and land managers. The Quail Springs WSA lies astride this route. To the north and south the Desert National Game Range and private lands severely restrict alternative routes through or to southern Nevada.

**4. Impacts on Development of a Railroad Line.** Wilderness designation could affect the use of land for a transportation corridor. A route north of Las Vegas has been identified by the Department of Energy as a natural course for a northwest-southeast railroad line which would tie into Yucca Mountain and a major railroad in Las Vegas. The Quail Springs WSA lies astride this route. To the north and south the Desert National Game Range and private lands severely restrict alternative routes.

**5. Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise.** The desert tortoise has been emergency listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Quail Spring WSA contains Category 2 tortoise habitat. Desert tortoise and their habitat could benefit from wilderness designation or be impacted by surface disturbing actions if the WSA is not designated as wilderness.

The following issues were identified in scoping but were not selected for detailed analysis for this WSA. The reasons for setting aside each of the issues are discussed below:

**6. Impacts on Exploration for and Development of Non-Energy Mineral Resources.** Wilderness designation could effect the exploration and development of mineral resources by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. However, no exploration or development of known or potential mineral resources is projected to occur within the WSA.

**7. Impacts on Military Overflights.** Concerns were raised by the U.S. Air Force as to what affect wilderness designation would have on low-level military flights over the WSA. The Wilderness Management Policy states "Where low (military) overflight is a problem, or expected to become a problem, wilderness management plans will provide for liaison with proper military authorities, the Federal Aviation Administration, and contact with pilots in the general area in an effort to reduce low flight."

**8. Impacts on Cultural Resources.** Cultural resources have been identified along the WSA's southern border. The WSA does not possess any prehistoric or historic resources that are currently listed or proposed for nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. It is not expected that impacts to cultural resources within the area, occurring from casual or unregulated uses would vary as a result of wilderness designation or nondesignation.

In addition, prior to approval of any surface-disturbing activity such as a mining plan of operation, application to drill, seismic exploration, utility development or range improvement development, etc., BLM requires completion of a cultural resource inventory. For any cultural resources identified during the inventory, mitigating measures such as avoidance, salvage collection, formal study, excavation, etc., would be proposed and implemented to preserve the scientific information and/or lessen the physical impacts. The consideration given to cultural resources is in accord with Bureau responsibilities toward Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (36 CFR 800), to identify those properties which are eligible or potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Bureau policy is to protect, manage, and avoid inadvertent loss of

cultural resources (BLM Manual 8100.06). The framework for this policy is encompassed by a body of surface protection and antiquities legislation. Thus under any alternative, impacts to cultural resources would be approximately the same and these cultural resources would be protected and managed in accordance with Bureau guidelines and legislative mandates.

**9. Impacts on Water Sources.** No water sources are known to exist within the WSA. Therefore, the issue of how water quality and quantity would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation within the areas will not be considered for this WSA.

## **EL DORADO WSA**

The following issues were selected for detailed analysis.

**1. Impacts on Wilderness Values.** The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness. In addition, those uses and actions occurring on or projected to take place on those private lands located within the borders of the WSA, may adversely effect their wilderness values.

**2. Impacts on Exploration for and Development of Non-Energy Mineral Resources.** Wilderness designation could effect exploration for and development of potential and known mineral resources by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. Development of existing mineral resources within designated wilderness could be affected by wilderness management restrictions.

**3. Impacts on Levels of Motorized Recreational Use.** Wilderness designation would eliminate the cross country, off-road use of motorized vehicles for hunting, trapping, rocks and minerals collecting access, racing, vehicle camping and off-road driving in the WSA. Eliminating this use would shift motorized recreational uses currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands.

**4. Impacts on Recreational Management within the El Dorado WSA.** Planning efforts proposed the development of a recreational interpretative program by developing trails and placing signs within the WSA. The impact of wilderness designation on the projected activity is an issue to be analyzed for this WSA.

**5. Impacts on Development of Utilities.** Wilderness designation could affect the use of land for utility corridors. The route north of Highway 60 is the natural course for east-west interregional utilities which tie into either the Navajo-McCullough Substation or the Hoover Dam facilities and has received considerable attention from potential users and land managers. The El Dorado WSA lies astride this route. To the north and south withdrawals, private lands and development severely restrict alternative routes through or to southern Nevada.

**6. Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise.** The desert tortoise has been emergency listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Eldorado WSA contains Category 3 tortoise habitat. Desert tortoise and their habitat could benefit from wilderness designation or be impacted by surface disturbing actions if the WSA is not designated as wilderness.

The following issues were identified in scoping but were not selected for detailed analysis for this WSA. The reasons for setting aside each of the issues are discussed below:

**7. Impacts on Cultural Resources.** The WSA does not possess any prehistoric or historic resources that are currently listed or proposed for nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. No cultural sites have been recorded within the WSA. It is not expected that impacts to any unidentified cultural resources within the area, occurring from casual or unregulated uses would

vary as a result of wilderness designation or nondesignation.

In addition, prior to approval of any surface-disturbing activity such as a mining plan of operation, application to drill, seismic exploration, utility development or range improvement development, etc., BLM requires completion of a cultural resource inventory. For any cultural resources identified during the inventory, mitigating measures such as avoidance, salvage collection, formal study, excavation, etc., would be proposed and implemented to preserve the scientific information and/or lessen the physical impacts. The consideration given to cultural resources is in accord with Bureau responsibilities toward Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (36 CFR 800), to identify those properties which are eligible or potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Bureau policy is to protect, manage, and avoid inadvertent loss of cultural resources (BLM Manual 8100.06). The framework for this policy is encompassed by a body of surface protection and antiquities legislation. Thus under any alternative, impacts to cultural resources would be approximately the same and these cultural resources would be protected and managed in accordance with Bureau guidelines and legislative mandates.

**8. Impacts on Management of Bighorn Sheep.** Management of Desert bighorn sheep and the construction and maintenance of water developments were concerns identified during scoping. The Wilderness Management Policy provides for both the re-establishment of native species, management of current populations and the development of waters. Although there may be some restrictions placed on the way waters are developed and subsequent maintenance activities as a result of wilderness designation, such restrictions would not significantly affect management, re-establishment and water development activities.

**9. Impacts on Water Sources.** Within the WSA, water sources are extremely limited and consist of one developed and one undeveloped spring. The issue of how water quality and quantity would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation within the areas will not be considered for this WSA. There were no existing or projected activities that were found to adversely impact the quality and quantity of the water sources.

**10. Impacts on Livestock Developments and Maintenance Activities.** Concerns were raised that livestock operators would not be able to maintain their grazing facilities or construct planned range projects. This issue was considered but dropped from detailed analysis because no livestock developments are planned for the WSA and the BLM's Wilderness Management Policy provides for the continued maintenance of the one existing developed spring. The maintenance of the one existing spring would continue within the WSA subject to reasonable controls and restrictions. Restrictions and controls would be placed on the use of motor vehicles, motorized equipment and mechanical transport.

**11. Impacts on Private Inholdings.** The impact of wilderness designation or nondesignation on private land inholdings in the WSA (120 acres) was considered as an issue but dropped from detailed analysis. BLM's Wilderness Management Policy provides for adequate access to non-federal lands completely surrounded by a wilderness area. Such access would be a combination of routes and modes of travel which will cause the least lasting impact on the wilderness resource and, at the same time, serve the reasonable purposes for which the non-federal lands are held or used.

Presently, a permanent access route does not exist through the WSA to the 120 acre private inholding. An access route into the inholdings is projected as interest has been shown in developing the 120 acre parcel.

## **IRETEBA PEAKS WSA**

The following issues were selected for detailed analysis.

**1. Impacts on Wilderness Values.** The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness.

**2. Impacts on Exploration for and Development of Non-Energy Mineral Resources.** Wilderness designation could effect the exploration and development of potential and known mineral resources by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. Development of existing mineral resources within designated wilderness could be affected by wilderness management restrictions.

**3. Impacts on Levels of Motorized Recreational Use.** Wilderness designation would eliminate the cross country, off-road use of motorized vehicles for hunting and trapping access, vehicle camping and off-road driving in the WSA. Eliminating this use would shift motorized recreational uses currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands.

**4. Impacts on Development of Utilities.** Wilderness designation could affect the use of land for utility development. A route for a transmission line has been identified by the Southern California Edison Company, along the northern boundary of the Ireteba Peaks WSA. The proposed transmission line would be an extension of an existing line. Therefore, the impact of wilderness designation on land use for utilities in the Ireteba Peaks WSA is an issue analyzed in this EIS.

**5. Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise.** The desert tortoise has been emergency listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Ireteba Peaks WSA contains Category 2 tortoise habitat. Desert tortoise and their habitat could benefit from wilderness designation or be impacted by surface disturbing actions if the WSA is not designated as wilderness.

The following issues were identified in scoping but were not selected for detailed analysis for this WSA. The reasons for setting aside each of the issues are discussed below:

**6. Impacts on Cultural Resources.** The WSA does not possess any prehistoric or historic resources that are currently listed or proposed for nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. No cultural sites have been recorded within the WSA. It is not expected that impacts to any unidentified cultural resources within the area, occurring from casual or unregulated uses would vary as a result of wilderness designation or nondesignation.

In addition, prior to approval of any surface-disturbing activity such as a mining plan of operation, application to drill, seismic exploration, utility development or range improvement development, etc., BLM requires completion of a cultural resource inventory. For any cultural resources identified during the inventory, mitigating measures such as avoidance, salvage collection, formal study, excavation, etc., would be proposed and implemented to preserve the scientific information and/or lessen the physical impacts. The consideration given to cultural resources is in accord with Bureau responsibilities toward Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (36 CFR 800), to identify those properties which are eligible or potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Bureau policy is to protect, manage, and avoid inadvertent loss of cultural resources (BLM Manual 8100.06). The framework for this policy is encompassed by a body of surface protection and antiquities legislation. Thus under any alternative, impacts to cultural resources would be approximately the same and these cultural resources would be protected and managed in accordance with Bureau guidelines and legislative mandates.

**7. Impacts on Management of Bighorn Sheep.** Management of Desert bighorn sheep and the



construction and maintenance of water developments were concerns identified during scoping. The **Wilderness Management Policy** provides for both the re-establishment of native species, management of current populations and the development of waters. Although there may be some restrictions placed on the way waters are developed and subsequent maintenance activities as a result of wilderness designation, such restrictions would not significantly affect management, re-establishment and water development activities.

**8. Impacts on Water Sources.** Within the WSA, water sources are extremely limited and consist of five undeveloped seeps and springs. The issue of how water quality and quantity would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation will not be considered because no activities were found to adversely impact the quality and quantity of the water sources.

**9. Impacts on Livestock Developments and Maintenance Activities.** Concerns were raised that livestock operators would not be able to maintain their grazing facilities or construct planned range projects. No range facilities exist within or are proposed for the WSA. Therefore, this issue will not be analyzed in the EIS for this WSA.

## **JUMBO SPRINGS WSA**

The following issues were selected for detailed analysis.

**1. Impacts on Wilderness Values.** The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness.

The following issues were identified in scoping but were not selected for detailed analysis for this WSA. The reasons for setting aside each of the issues are discussed below:

**2. Impacts on Exploration for and Development of Non-Energy Mineral Resources.** Wilderness designation could affect the exploration and development of mineral resources by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. However, no exploration or development of known or potential mineral resources is projected to occur within the WSA.

**3. Impacts on the Levels of Motorized Recreational Use.** Upon close examination, levels of motorized recreational use in the Marble Canyon WSA were determined not to be significant enough to be analyzed in the EIS. The area is either too rugged for motorized vehicle access or it does not offer exceptional opportunities to warrant motorized recreational use. Therefore, this issue will not be analyzed for this WSA.

**4. Impacts on Cultural Resources.** The WSA does not possess any prehistoric or historic resources that are currently listed or proposed for nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. No cultural sites have been recorded within the WSA. It is not expected that impacts to any unidentified cultural resources within the area, occurring from casual or unregulated uses would vary as a result of wilderness designation or nondesignation.

In addition, prior to approval of any surface-disturbing activity such as a mining plan of operation, application to drill, seismic exploration, utility development or range improvement development, etc., BLM requires completion of a cultural resource inventory. For any cultural resources identified during the inventory, mitigating measures such as avoidance, salvage collection, formal study, excavation, etc., would be proposed and implemented to preserve the scientific information and/or lessen the physical impacts. The consideration given to cultural resources is in accord with Bureau responsibilities toward Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (36 CFR 800), to identify those properties which are eligible or potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Bureau policy is to protect, manage, and avoid inadvertent loss of

cultural resources (BLM Manual 8100.06). The framework for this policy is encompassed by a body of surface protection and antiquities legislation. Thus under any alternative, impacts to cultural resources would be approximately the same and these cultural resources would be protected and managed in accordance with Bureau guidelines and legislative mandates.

**5. Impacts on Reintroduction and Management of Bighorn Sheep.** Management of Desert bighorn sheep and the construction and maintenance of water developments were concerns identified during scoping. The **Wilderness Management Policy** provides for both the re-establishment of native species, management of current populations and the development of waters. Although there may be some restrictions placed on the way waters are developed and subsequent maintenance activities as a result of wilderness designation, such restrictions would not significantly affect management, re-establishment and water development activities.

**6. Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise.** The desert tortoise has been emergency listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Jumbo Springs WSA contains uncategorized tortoise habitat. If desert tortoise occur in this WSA, they and their habitat could benefit from wilderness designation or be impacted by surface disturbing actions if the WSA is not designated as wilderness.

**7. Impacts on Water Sources.** Within the WSA, no water sources have been identified. Therefore, the issue of how water quality and quantity would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation within the area will not be considered for this WSA.

**8. Impacts on Livestock Developments and Maintenance Activities.** Concerns were raised that livestock operators would not be able to maintain their grazing facilities or construct planned range projects. However, no range projects exist within or are proposed for the WSA.

## **NELLIS ABC WSA**

The following issues were selected for detailed analysis.

**1. Impacts on Wilderness Values.** The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness.

**2. Impacts on Levels of Motorized Recreational Use.** Wilderness designation would eliminate the cross country, off-road use of motorized vehicles for hunting access and off-road driving in the WSA. Eliminating this use would shift motorized recreational uses currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands.

**3. Impacts on Development of Utilities.** Wilderness designation could affect the use of land for utility corridors. A route paralleling Highway 95 is the natural course for northwest-southeast interregional utilities which between the Nevada Test Site and Las Vegas and has received considerable attention from potential users and land managers. The Nellis ABC WSA lies astride this route. To the north and south the Desert National Game Range and private lands severely restrict alternative routes through or to southern Nevada.

**4. Impacts on Development of a Railroad Line.** Wilderness designation could affect the use of land for a transportation corridor. A route north of Las Vegas has been identified by the Department of Energy as a natural course for a northwest-southeast railroad line which would tie into Yucca Mountain and a major railroad in Las Vegas. The Nellis ABC WSA lies astride this route. To the north and south the Desert National Game Range and private lands severely restrict alternative routes.



**5. Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise.** The desert tortoise has been emergency listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Nellis ABC WSA contains Category 2 tortoise habitat. Desert tortoise and their habitat could benefit from wilderness designation or be impacted by surface disturbing actions if the WSA is not designated as wilderness.

The following issues were identified in scoping but were not selected for detailed analysis for this WSA. The reasons for setting aside each of the issues are discussed below:

**6. Impacts on Exploration for and Development of Non-Energy Mineral Resources.** Wilderness designation could effect the exploration and development of mineral resources by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. However, no exploration or development of known or potential mineral resources is projected to occur within the WSA.

**7. Impacts on Military Overflights.** Concerns were raised by the U.S. Air Force as to what affect wilderness designation would have on low-level military flights over the WSA. The Wilderness Management Policy states "Where low (military) overflight is a problem, or expected to become a problem, wilderness management plans will provide for liaison with proper military authorities, the Federal Aviation Administration, and contact with pilots in the general area in an effort to reduce low flight."

**8. Impacts on Cultural Resources.** The WSA does not possess any prehistoric or historic resources that are currently listed or proposed for nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. No cultural sites have been recorded within the WSA. It is not expected that impacts to any unidentified cultural resources within the area, occurring from casual or unregulated uses would vary as a result of wilderness designation or nondesignation.

In addition, prior to approval of any surface-disturbing activity such as a mining plan of operation, application to drill, seismic exploration, utility development or range improvement development, etc., BLM requires completion of a cultural resource inventory. For any cultural resources identified during the inventory, mitigating measures such as avoidance, salvage collection, formal study, excavation, etc., would be proposed and implemented to preserve the scientific information and/or lessen the physical impacts. The consideration given to cultural resources is in accord with Bureau responsibilities toward Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (36 CFR 800), to identify those properties which are eligible or potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Bureau policy is to protect, manage, and avoid inadvertent loss of cultural resources (BLM Manual 8100.06). The framework for this policy is encompassed by a body of surface protection and antiquities legislation. Thus under any alternative, impacts to cultural resources would be approximately the same and these cultural resources would be protected and managed in accordance with Bureau guidelines and legislative mandates.

**9. Impacts on Water Sources.** Within the WSA, no water sources have been identified. Therefore, the issue of how water quality and quantity would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation within the area will not be considered for the WSA.

## **EVERGREEN WSA**

The following issues were selected for detailed analysis.

**1. Impacts on Wilderness Values.** The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness.

**2. Impacts on Levels of Motorized Recreational Use.** Wilderness designation would eliminate the cross country, off-road use of motorized vehicles for hunting and trapping access, vehicle camping, and off-road driving. Eliminating this use would shift motorized recreational uses currently occurring in the WSAs to adjacent lands.

**3. Impacts on Development of Utilities.** Wilderness designation could affect the use of land for utility corridors. The route along Highway 93 is the natural course for north-south interregional utilities which tie into either the Navajo-McCullough Substation, Las Vegas, or the Hoover Dam facilities and has received considerable attention from potential users and land managers. The Evergreen ABC WSA lies astride this route. To the west and east, other WSAs, the Desert National Game Range and topography severely restrict alternative routes through or to southern Nevada.

**4. Impacts on Existing Material Site Right-of-way.** Wilderness designation could affect usage (extraction of sand and gravel) of one material site right-of-way granted in perpetuity by BLM to the Nevada Department of Transportation.

**5. Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise.** The desert tortoise has been emergency listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Evergreen WSA contains Category 1 tortoise habitat. Desert tortoise and their habitat could benefit from wilderness designation or be impacted by surface disturbing actions if the WSA is not designated as wilderness.

The following issues were identified in scoping but were not selected for detailed analysis for this WSA. The reasons for setting aside each of the issues are discussed below:

**6. Impacts on Exploration for and Development of Non-Energy Mineral Resources.** Wilderness designation could effect the exploration and development of mineral resources by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. However, no exploration or development of known or potential mineral resources is projected to occur within the WSA.

**7. Impacts on Military Overflights.** Concerns were raised by the U.S. Air Force as to what affect wilderness designation would have on low-level military flights over the WSA. The Wilderness Management Policy states "Where low (military) overflight is a problem, or expected to become a problem, wilderness management plans will provide for liaison with proper military authorities, the Federal Aviation Administration, and contact with pilots in the general area in an effort to reduce low flight."

**8. Impacts on Cultural Resources.** Cultural resources have been identified within the WSA. The WSA does not possess any prehistoric or historic resources that are currently listed or proposed for nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. It is not expected that impacts to cultural resources within the area, occurring from casual or unregulated uses would vary as a result of wilderness designation or nondesignation.

In addition, prior to approval of any surface-disturbing activity such as a mining plan of operation, application to drill, seismic exploration, utility development or range improvement development, etc., BLM requires completion of a cultural resource inventory. For any cultural resources identified during the inventory, mitigating measures such as avoidance, salvage collection, formal study, excavation, etc., would be proposed and implemented to preserve the scientific information and/or lessen the physical impacts. The consideration given to cultural resources is in accord with Bureau responsibilities toward Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (36 CFR 800), to identify those properties which are eligible or potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Bureau policy is to protect, manage, and avoid inadvertent loss of cultural resources (BLM Manual 8100.06). The framework for this policy is encompassed by a body

of surface protection and antiquities legislation. Thus under any alternative, impacts to cultural resources would be approximately the same and these cultural resources would be protected and managed in accordance with Bureau guidelines and legislative mandates.

**9. Impacts on Water Sources.** No water sources are known to exist within the WSA. Therefore, the issue of how water quality and quantity would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation within the area will not be considered for this WSA.

**10. Impacts on Livestock Developments and Maintenance Activities.** Concerns were raised that livestock operators would not be able to maintain their grazing facilities or construct planned range projects. This issue was considered but dropped from detailed analysis because no livestock developments are planned for the WSA and the BLM's Wilderness Management Policy provides for the continued maintenance of the one existing earthen reservoir.

The maintenance of the one existing small earthen reservoir would continue within the WSA subject to reasonable controls and restrictions. Restrictions and controls would be placed on the use of motor vehicles, motorized equipment and mechanical transport.

## **LAHONTAN CUTTHROAT TROUT (LCT) ISA**

The following issues were selected for detailed analysis.

**1. Impacts on Wilderness Values.** The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and various special features of the ISA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the ISA not be designated wilderness. In addition, those uses and actions occurring on or projected to take place on those private lands located within the borders of the ISA, may adversely effect their wilderness values.

**2. Impacts on Levels of Motorized Recreational Use.** Wilderness designation would eliminate the cross country, off-road use of motorized vehicles for hunting and trapping access, and vehicle camping in the ISA. Eliminating this use would shift motorized recreational uses currently occurring in the ISA to adjacent lands. The impact of wilderness designation on motorized recreational use within the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout ISA is an issue for analysis.

**3. Impacts on the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout (LCT) - Threatened Species Habitat.** The LCT is currently listed as a threatened species on the Federal list of "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants". The Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Instant Study Area was officially designated as a Natural Area in 1973 for the specific purpose of ensuring the preservation of the Lahontan Cutthroat trout in its natural habitat, and to maximize available spawning areas. The Lahontan Cutthroat Trout threatened species habitat available within the ISA could benefit from wilderness designation. This habitat may be adversely affected by uses and actions that could occur should the ISA not be designated wilderness.

The following issues were identified in scoping but were not selected for detailed analysis for this WSA. The reasons for setting aside each of the issues are discussed below:

**4. Impacts on Exploration for and Development of Non-Energy Mineral Resources.** Due to the mineral segregation of 1968, there is no mineral activity allowed in the ISA. As there will be no change in the existing situation, this issue will not be analyzed for this WSA.

**5. Impacts on Military Overflights.** Concerns were raised by the U.S. Air Force as to what affect wilderness designation would have on low-level military flights over the WSA. The Wilderness Management Policy states "Where low (military) overflight is a problem, or expected to become

a problem, wilderness management plans will provide for liaison with proper military authorities, the Federal Aviation Administration, and contact with pilots in the general area in an effort to reduce low flight."

**6. Impacts on Cultural Resources.** Cultural resources have been identified within the WSA. The WSA does not possess any prehistoric or historic resources that are currently listed or proposed for nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. It is not expected that impacts to cultural resources within the area, occurring from casual or unregulated uses would vary as a result of wilderness designation or nondesignation.

In addition, prior to approval of any surface-disturbing activity such as a mining plan of operation, application to drill, seismic exploration, utility development or range improvement development, etc., BLM requires completion of a cultural resource inventory. For any cultural resources identified during the inventory, mitigating measures such as avoidance, salvage collection, formal study, excavation, etc., would be proposed and implemented to preserve the scientific information and/or lessen the physical impacts. The consideration given to cultural resources is in accord with Bureau responsibilities toward Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (36 CFR 800), to identify those properties which are eligible or potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Bureau policy is to protect, manage, and avoid inadvertent loss of cultural resources (BLM Manual 8100.06). The framework for this policy is encompassed by a body of surface protection and antiquities legislation. Thus under any alternative, impacts to cultural resources would be approximately the same and these cultural resources would be protected and managed in accordance with Bureau guidelines and legislative mandates.

**7. Impacts on Other Threatened and Endangered Species.** Wildlife and vegetation inventories did not identify any other listed threatened or endangered species within the WSA. Notification of Scoping was sent to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and no additional information was received regarding this issue. Therefore, this issue will not be analyzed for this WSA.

**8. Impacts on Water Sources.** Within the ISA, water sources are numerous and consist of developed and undeveloped springs and a small reservoir. No surface disturbing activities are projected to occur within the WSA that would impact the quality and quantity of the existing water sources.

**9. Impacts on Livestock Developments and Maintenance Activities.** Concerns were raised that livestock operators would not be able to maintain their grazing facilities or construct planned range projects. This issue was considered but dropped from detailed analysis because the BLM's **Wilderness Management Policy** provides for the continued maintenance of the existing fencelines, developed springs and small reservoirs.

Maintenance of the several existing fencelines and developed springs and the four small reservoirs would continue within the designated wilderness area under reasonable controls and restrictions. Restrictions and controls would be placed on the use of motor vehicles, motorized equipment and mechanical transport.

**10. Impacts on Private Inholdings.** The impact of wilderness designation or nondesignation on private land inholdings in the ISA (1,256 acres) was considered as an issue but dropped from detailed analysis. BLM's **Wilderness Management Policy** provides for adequate access to non-federal lands completely surrounded by a wilderness area. Such access would be a combination of routes and modes of travel which will cause the least lasting impact on the wilderness resource and, at the same time, serve the reasonable purposes for which the non-federal lands are held or used.

Established access routes cross the WSA into several of the private inholdings, as the parcels have

been developed to some degree. One small parcel located near the southern border of the ISA does not currently have any establish permanent access route. It is projected that road access will be developed to the parcel.

## FORMULATION OF ALTERNATIVES

### Proposed Action

Development of the Proposed Action is guided by requirements of the Bureau's Planning Regulations, 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), part 1600. The BLM's **Wilderness Study Policy** (published February 3, 1982, in the Federal Register) supplements the planning regulations by providing the specific factors to be considered in developing suitability recommendations during the planning sequence.

The Proposed Action(s) recommend as suitable for wilderness designation those WSAs or portions of WSAs with high quality wilderness values. Under the Proposed Action(s), 22,195 acres would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation. This includes partial recommendations of 8,300 acres for Marble Canyon; and 13,895 acres for Lime Canyon. The remaining eleven WSAs and the ISA were not recommended. (See Table 1-3).

### Alternatives to the Proposed Action Selected for Analysis

The BLM **Wilderness Study Policy** calls for the formulation and evaluation of alternatives ranging from resource protection to resource production. The alternatives assessed in this EIS include: (1) an All Wilderness Alternative for each WSA; (2) a No Wilderness Alternative for each WSA; and (3) a Partial Wilderness Alternative(s) for five WSAs.

In this document, the No Action Alternative, as required by the National Environmental Protection Act, and the No Wilderness Alternative are equivalent. Both advocate continuation of management as outlined in the existing Management Framework Plan and recommends the WSA as unsuitable for wilderness.

The All Wilderness Alternative represents the maximum possible acreage that could be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation.

Partial Wilderness Alternative(s) can make suitable or unsuitable recommendations ranging between the All Wilderness and No Action Alternatives. A Partial Wilderness Alternative can recommend as suitable for wilderness designation something less than the entire acreage of one WSA.



Table 1-3  
Alternatives By WSA

WSA/Alternatives	Suitable Acres	Nonsuitable Acres
Marble Canyon (NV-040-086)		
<u>Proposed Action</u> (Alternative A)	8,300	10,850
All Wilderness	19,150	0
No Wilderness/No Action	0	19,150
Fish and Wildlife #1 (NV-050-201)		
<u>Proposed Action</u> (No Wilderness)	0	11,090
All Wilderness	11,090	0
Fish and Wildlife #2 (NV-050-216)		
<u>Proposed Action</u> (No Wilderness)	0	17,242
All Wilderness	17,242	0
Fish and Wildlife #3 (NV-050-217)		
<u>Proposed Action</u> (No Wilderness)	0	22,002
All Wilderness	22,002	0
Lime Canyon (NV-050-231)		
<u>Proposed Action</u> (Alternative A)	13,895	20,785
All Wilderness	34,680	0
No Wilderness	0	34,680
Million Hills (NV-050-233)		
<u>Proposed Action</u> (No Wilderness)	0	21,296
All Wilderness	21,296	0
Alternative A	11,050	10,246
Garrett Buttes (NV-050-235)		
<u>Proposed Action</u> (No Wilderness)	0	11,835
All Wilderness	11,835	0
Quail Springs (NV-050-411)		
<u>Proposed Action</u> (No Wilderness)	0	12,145
All Wilderness	12,145	0
El Dorado (NV-050-423)		
<u>Proposed Action</u> (No Wilderness)	0	12,290
All Wilderness	12,290	0
Alternative A	9,570	2,720
Ireteba Peaks (NV-050-438)		
<u>Proposed Action</u> (No Wilderness)	0	14,994
All Wilderness	14,994	0
Alternative A	10,155	4,839
Jumbo Springs (NV-050-236)		
<u>Proposed Action</u> (No Wilderness)	0	3,466
All Wilderness	3,466	0
Nellis ABC (NV-050-04R-15)		
<u>Proposed Action</u> (No Wilderness)	0	5,718
All Wilderness	5,718	0
Evergreen ABC (NV-050-01R-16)		
<u>Proposed Action</u> (No Wilderness)	0	2,694
All Wilderness	2,694	0
Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Natural Area ISA		
<u>Proposed Action</u> (No Wilderness)	0	12,316
All Wilderness	12,316	0





## CHAPTER 2

### PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

Since the pattern of future actions within the WSAs cannot be predicted with certainty, assumptions were made to allow the analysis of impacts under the Proposed Action and Alternatives. These assumptions are the basis of the impacts identified in this EIS. They are not management plans or proposals, but represent feasible patterns of activities which could occur under the alternatives analyzed.

#### MARBLE CANYON WSA (NV-040-086)

##### PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness Alternative)

The Proposed Action recommends 8,300 acres suitable for wilderness designation and 10,850 acres as nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-1).

##### Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions

Subject to valid existing rights, the 8,300 acres of the Marble Canyon WSA recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. Validity examinations would be conducted on any mining claims located within the WSA at the time a plan of operations is submitted. As of 1987, a total of 14 mining claims covering 1,120 acres existed within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA.

The northern tip of the suitable portion in the vicinity of Bars Canyon is considered to have a high favorability for the occurrence of marble. Marble deposits are known to exist in the area but are of a relatively poor quality. In addition, the cost of quarrying marble and the accessibility and distance to markets, precludes development (GEM 1983). Exploration and development are not, therefore, anticipated within this portion of the WSA.

The 10,850 acres of the Marble Canyon WSA recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open to all forms of appropriation under the mining laws. As of 1987, 12 claims containing 1,920 acres existed within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA.

Some exploration to define the extent of marble deposits is projected to occur north of Bar's Canyon. Due to the widespread nature of the marble deposits, this exploration would likely occur in the more easily accessible area to the north of Bar's Canyon. As a result of this exploration, there would be approximately 6 acres of surface disturbance. The disturbance would include up to 2 miles of road access and drill pad construction. Development of marble resources as a result of exploration would likely not occur due to the reason listed above under the suitable section.

##### Energy Resource Actions

Potential for oil, gas and geothermal resources within the Marble Canyon WSA is considered to be low (GEM 1983). As of 1987, no oil, gas, or geothermal leases existed within the WSA. Exploration or development of energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) is not projected within the WSA.

##### Recreation Management Actions

The 8,300 acre suitable portion of the Marble Canyon WSA would be closed to cross country motorized recreational pursuits such as off-road vehicle sightseeing, vehicle camping, and vehicular access for hunting and trapping. This would eliminate about 8 visits per year within the recommended suitable area.

Non-motorized recreation would continue to increase from an estimated 5 to about 10 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting and trapping.

The 10,850 acre nonsuitable portion would remain available for motorized recreational use. The area will be managed through an off-road vehicle management plan and designation as specified in the Schell Management Framework Plan (MFP). The motorized recreational use in the nonsuitable portion is projected to remain at approximately 17 visits annually.

Non-motorized recreational use would continue within the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA. Visitation within this portion of the WSA is projected to remain at approximately 5 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting.

#### **Grazing Management Actions**

The Marble Canyon WSA lies within three grazing allotments; the Muncy Creek Allotment (year-round) and the Smith Creek Allotment (fall-spring) and the Devil's Gate Allotment (winter-spring). Each allotment has one permittee. Within the suitable portion of the Marble Canyon WSA approximately 75 cattle AUMs would be utilized within the Muncy Creek Allotment, 20 cattle AUMs within the Smith Creek Allotment and 5 sheep AUMs within the Devil's Gate Allotment. Within the nonsuitable portion of the Marble Canyon WSA approximately 225 cattle AUMs would be utilized within the Muncy Creek Allotment, 150 cattle AUMs within the Smith Creek Allotment and 75 Sheep AUMs within the Devil's Gate Allotment. These grazing levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

Two developed seeps are located within the suitable portion of the WSA. One seep consists of a 3-foot diameter hole drilled about 4 feet into a cliff face. The seep is located at the terminus of a cherrystemmed route and was abandoned because it did not produce water. The other seep is a hand-dug hole located at the base of Thunder Mountain along a cherrystemmed route. Future maintenance would be accomplished by hand or by the use of a small backhoe every 5-10 years. No new range improvements are projected for the suitable portion of the WSA. Use of motorbikes off existing roads by the permittee, for the trailing of livestock would not be allowed within this portion of the WSA.

A corral is the only existing range improvement within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. Two proposed stock reservoirs would be constructed within the southeast portion of the nonsuitable area. The purpose of the reservoirs is to provide intermittent water sources on the east bench of the WSA. Use of motorbikes by the permittee, for the trailing of livestock, would continue within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA.

#### **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

All 19,150 acres of public land in the Marble Canyon WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-2).

#### **Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions**

Subject to valid and existing rights, the 19,150 acres of the Marble Canyon WSA recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. Validity examinations would be conducted on any mining claims located within the WSA at the time a plan of operations is submitted. As of 1987, a total of 26 mining claims covering 3,040 acres existed within the WSA.

Assuming that some existing claims would be valid at the time of designation, limited exploration is projected to take place within the Marble Canyon WSA. An exploratory drilling program to define the extent of the more accessible marble deposits on existing marble claims would include drill pads and approximately 2 miles of access just north of Bars Canyon. Surface disturbance associated with the 2 miles of access would include some limited blade work to assist in cross county travel. Blade work would be used only to allow vehicles to pass, not to create a road. The remaining surface disturbance would consist of small drill pads. In total, about 2 acres of land would be disturbed. Development of marble resources is not projected to occur as a result of exploration. This is due to the relatively low quality of marble and the distance to potential markets (GEM 1983).

### **Energy Resource Actions**

Exploration for and development of energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) would not occur due to withdrawal of the designated wilderness area from mineral leasing and entry.

### **Recreation Management Actions**

The WSA would be closed to cross country motorized recreational pursuits such as off-road vehicle driving, vehicle camping, and vehicular access for hunting and trapping. This would eliminate about 25 visits per year within the WSA.

Non-motorized recreation is projected to increase from 10 to 20 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting and occasional hiking and nature study.

### **Grazing Management Actions**

The Marble Canyon WSA lies within three grazing allotments; the Muncy Creek Allotment (year long) and the Smith Creek Allotment (fall-spring) and the Devil's Gate Allotment (winter-spring). Each allotment has one permittee. Within the Marble Canyon WSA approximately 300 cattle AUMs would be utilized within the Muncy Creek Allotment, 170 cattle AUMs within the Smith Creek Allotment and 80 sheep AUMs within the Devil's Gate Allotment. These grazing levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

The Smith Creek Allotment permittee utilizes motorbikes for the trailing of livestock. Under the All Wilderness Alternative the use of motorized vehicles for this type of activity would be restricted to boundary and cherrystemmed roads.

Existing range improvements include 1 mile of fence and a corral. Two developed seeps (one dry) are also located within the WSA. Future maintenance of the usable seep would be accomplished by hand or by the use of a small backhoe every 5-10 years. The remaining projects would be maintained with out vehicular access. The construction of two stock reservoirs proposed on the east bench of the WSA would occur.

### **NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE (No Action Alternative)**

The No Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 19,150 acre area as nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-3).

### **Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions**

The 19,150 acres of the Marble Canyon WSA recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open to all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. Validity examinations would not be required prior to development. As of 1987, 26 mining claims covering 3,040 acres existed within the WSA.

An exploratory drilling program to define the extent of the marble deposits along the more easily accessible northern portion of the WSA is projected. Surface disturbance would include up to 2 miles of a road access and drill pad construction. This program would result in a cumulative total of 6 acres of surface disturbance within the northeast portion of the WSA. Development of marble resources is not projected to occur as the result of exploration. This is due to the relatively low quality of marble and the distance to potential markets (GEM 1983).

### **Energy Resource Actions**

Exploration or development of energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) is not projected due to a low potential for their occurrence (GEM 1983).

### **Recreation Management Actions**

The entire WSA would remain available for motorized recreational use. The area will be managed through an off-road vehicle management plan and designations as specified in the Schell Management Framework Plan (MFP). The motorized recreational use in the WSA is projected to remain at approximately 25 visits annually.

Non-motorized recreation use is currently estimated at 10 visits annually. It is projected that this use would increase to an estimated 15 visits annually under the Proposed Action. Primary uses would be hunting.

#### **Grazing Management Actions**

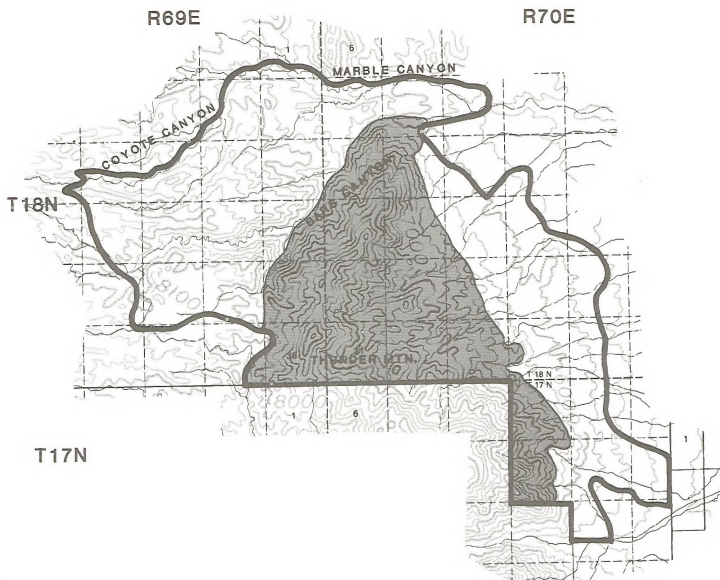
The Marble Canyon WSA lies within three grazing allotments; the Muncy Creek Allotment (year long) and the Smith Creek Allotment (fall-spring) and the Devil's Gate Allotment (winter-spring). Each allotment has one permittee. Within the Marble Canyon WSA approximately 300 cattle AUMs would be utilized within the Muncy Creek Allotment, 170 cattle AUMs within the Smith Creek Allotment and 80 sheep AUMs within the Devil's Gate Allotment. These grazing levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

Existing range improvements include 1 mile of fence and a corral. Two developed seeps (one dry) are also located within the WSA. Future maintenance of the usable seep would be accomplished by hand or by the use of a small backhoe every 5-10 years. Maintenance of the remaining projects would continue as needed. Use of motorbikes off existing roads by the permittee, for the trailing of livestock would continue within the WSA. The construction of two stock reservoirs proposed on the east bench of the WSA would be allowed under the No Wilderness Alternative.

Table 2-1

## Comparative Summary of the Impacts by Alternative - Marble Canyon WSA

ISSUE TOPICS	PROPOSED ACTION (PARTIAL WILDERNESS)	ALL WILDERNESS	NO WILDERNESS
Impacts on Wilderness Values	The excellent opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, highly scenic geologic values and the stands of bristlecone pine would be preserved. Impacts to wilderness qualities in the nonsuitable portion would occur on approximately 10 acres concentrated north of Bars Canyon and on the eastern benches. The majority of the disturbances would be related to marble exploration and livestock reservoir construction.	Impacts to wilderness qualities on 10 acres would not occur. The bristlecone pine, geologic and archaeological values and prime raptor habitat would be preserved. Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive unconfined recreation would be retained on 19,148 acres.	Impairment of the wilderness values would occur on approximately 10 acres near Bars Canyon and the eastern bench of the WSA. Opportunities for solitude and primitive unconfined recreation, the bristlecone pines, raptor habitat and archaeological values would be unaffected. The remaining 19,140 acres would retain their wilderness values except for the creation of a few primitive two-tracked routes.
Impacts on Exploration for and Development of Non-Energy Mineral Resources	Exploration and development of marble resources would be foregone on unclaimed lands within the suitable portion. Marble resources could be developed on existing claims in the suitable portion. All lands within the nonsuitable portion would remain open to mineral entry with no impact to exploration or development of marble resources.	Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. Restricted exploration activity would occur. Development of the marble reserves is not expected to take place.	All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources.
Impacts on Grazing Management	The use of motorbikes to assist in the trailing of livestock would not be allowed in the suitable portion. This would have only a negligible effect on grazing operations since only a small portion of the suitable area lends itself to motorbike use.	The construction of two stock reservoirs would not be allowed, having no effect on current grazing practices. The switching from use of motorbikes to horses to accomplish livestock trailing would have a slight adverse economic impact on the operator.	There would be no impact on grazing management within the Marble Canyon WSA.



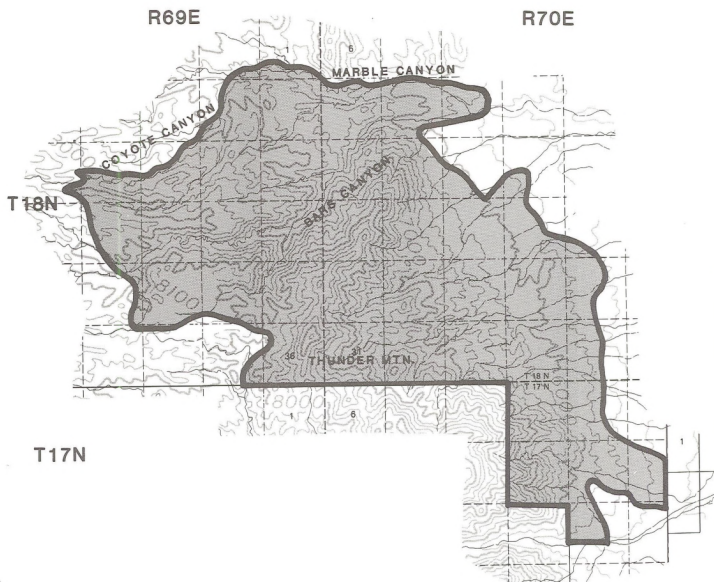
PROPOSED ACTION (PARTIAL)  
RECOMMENDED SUITABLE



## MAP 2- 1

PROPOSED ACTION PARTIAL  
WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE  
MARBLE CANYON  
NV-040-086

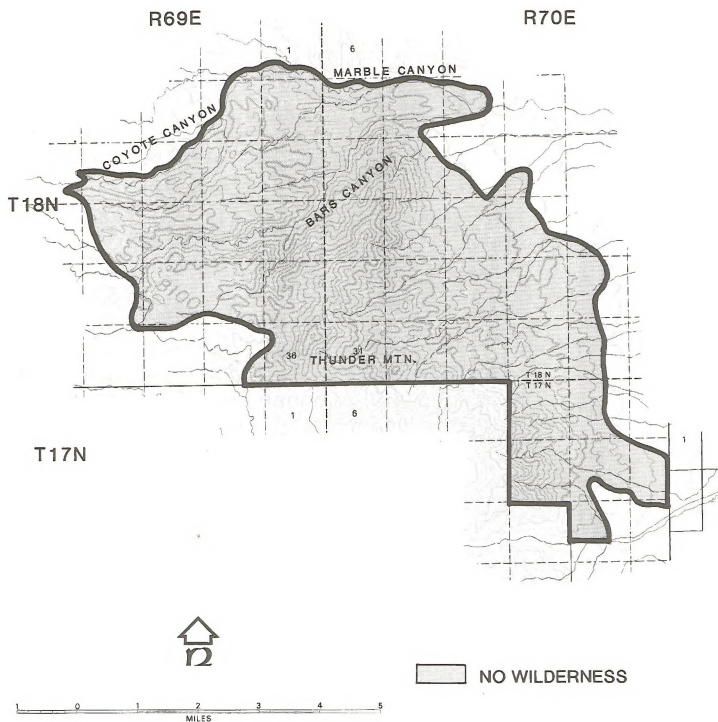




ALL WILDERNESS  
RECOMMENDED SUITABLE

**MAP 2- 2**  
**ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**  
**MARBLE CANYON**  
**NV-040-086**





**MAP 2- 3**  
**WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVES**  
**MARBLE CANYON**  
**NV-040-086**

## FISH AND WILDLIFE NO. 1 (NV-050-201)

### PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative)

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 11,090 acre area as nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-4).

#### Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions

The 11,090 acres of the Fish and Wildlife No. 1 would remain open to all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. Although no known metallic or nonmetallic minerals exist within the WSA as the geologic conditions are not favorable for the accumulation of these materials, it is projected that exploration, possibly for precious metals, would eventually occur on the four existing mining claims in the WSA. Exploration would entail the construction of 1 mile of road and the trenching of test pits on two acres. A projected total of 2.5 acres of ground would be physically disturbed from this mining exploration activity.

Extraction of sand and gravel from the two existing (but so far unused) material sites is projected and will result in the disturbance of 320 acres. These material sites are located on rights-of-way issued in perpetuity and may be developed at the discretion of the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT).

Mitigation designed to protect the desert tortoise and its habitat will be required for any surface disturbing actions and will include the following measures at a minimum:

- 1) Prior to the approval of any plan of operations a site specific survey will be conducted to determine tortoise occurrence.
- 2) The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be consulted (Section 7).
- 3) In Category I and II areas no net loss of habitat will be allowed. This will require acquisition of new or enhancement of existing habitat to replace habitat lost through disturbance. This may also require providing replacement material sites for NDOT outside of the Category I desert tortoise habitat.
- 4) Relocation of individual tortoises at risk to new locations. (Note to reader - Relocation of tortoise has not generally proved successful and is not generally favored by the Fish and Wildlife Service as a primary mitigating measure.)
- 5) Fencing of specific locations (material sites, exploration trenches, etc.) to prevent tortoises from entering disturbed areas.
- 6) Designation of travel routes and closure areas to avoid motorized use in areas of crucial habitat.
- 7) Rehabilitation of disturbed sites to restore damaged habitat.

"No net loss of habitat" refers to tortoise habitat in all of southern Nevada. Therefore, habitat lost due to actions within WSAs, whether designated wilderness or not, may be mitigated within the WSA or on lands elsewhere in southern Nevada which provide tortoise habitat. Similarly, habitat within WSAs could be enhanced to offset habitat losses in other areas. Both cases will depend on site specific environmental analysis and mitigating measures developed in response to a specific activity proposal.

#### Energy Resource Actions

Exploration for and development of energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) is not projected to occur due to low favorability for occurrence and a historic lack of interest in the area.

#### Recreation Management Actions

Motorized recreational use would continue as specified in the Clark County Management Framework Plan which limits the type and location of competitive high speed events. Motorized recreational use would be limited to designated roads and trails to protect crucial (Category I) desert tortoise habitat. Motorized recreational uses are projected to increase from an estimated 45 annual visits to 90 visits annually.

Non-motorized recreation use is currently estimated at 15 visits annually. It is projected that this use would increase to 20 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting, trapping and rockhounding.

### **Grazing Management Actions**

The Fish and Wildlife No. 1 WSA lies within one grazing allotment, the Arrow Canyon Allotment (ephemeral). This allotment has one permittee. Approximately ten percent of the Arrow Canyon Allotment is located within the WSA. The portion of the Arrow Canyon Allotment located within the WSA would utilize an estimated 30 AUMs for cattle. No range improvements exist within or are proposed for the WSA.

### **Wildlife Management Actions**

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Rangeland Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the U. S. The 11,090 acres of crucial habitat in the WSA has been preliminarily categorized as Category I desert tortoise habitat (see Appendix A). Category I and II habitats require extremely intensive management practices in order to maintain viable populations of desert tortoise. Categorization replaces the existing crucial/noncrucial habitat classification.

### **Realty Management Actions**

Under the Proposed Action utilities could be developed within the WSA. The construction of five 500 kv transmission lines is projected within a utility corridor one mile wide, extending the 14 mile length of the WSA. This projection does not include four buried utility lines (two gas and two fiber optic) included in the draft EIS proposed action projection. It was determined, following additional analysis of the desert tortoise habitat issue, that the impacts resulting from construction of these four lines could not be allowed in a Category I tortoise habitat area so they have been deleted.

Specific mitigating measures designed to protect the desert tortoise and minimize impacts to tortoise habitat will include at a minimum:

- 1) Prior to any construction being authorized, a site specific inventory will be conducted to determine the amount of habitat involved, the number of animals at risk and the cumulative effect of proposed and existing projects.
- 2) The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be consulted (Section 7).
- 3) Access road and tower site locations will be located (or relocated) to avoid impacting tortoises.
- 4) In Category I and II areas no net loss of habitat will be allowed. This will require acquisition of new or enhancement of existing habitat to replace habitat lost through disturbance.
- 5) Relocation of individual tortoises at risk to new locations. (Note to reader - Relocation of tortoise has not generally proved successful and is not generally favored by the Fish and Wildlife Service as a primary mitigating measure.)
- 6) Fencing of specific locations (material sites, exploration trenches, etc.) to prevent tortoises from entering disturbed areas.
- 7) Access will be limited to one road within the corridor to be used by all right-of-way holders. Access to individual tower locations will be by the shortest and/or least tortoise impacting route off the common access road.
- 8) Tower to tower travel during survey, design, construction and future maintenance will not be allowed except on the common access road, approved spur roads and in areas cleared for usage as a result of the site specific inventory.
- 9) Rehabilitation of disturbed sites to restore damaged habitat.

"No net loss of habitat" refers to tortoise habitat in all of southern Nevada. Therefore, habitat lost due to actions within WSAs, whether designated wilderness or not, may be mitigated within the WSA or on lands elsewhere in southern Nevada which provide tortoise habitat. Similarly, habitat within WSAs could be enhanced to offset habitat losses in other areas. Both cases will depend on site specific environmental analysis and mitigating measures developed in response to a specific activity proposal.

### **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

All 11,090 acres of public land in the Fish and Wildlife No. 1 WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation. (Map 2-5).

### **Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions**

Subject to valid existing rights, the 11,090 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. If plans of operation are received for the four existing claims in the WSA, a validity exam would be conducted. Development of mineral resources is not projected to occur under the All Wilderness Alternative.

Extraction of sand and gravel from the two existing (but so far unused) material sites is projected and will result in the disturbance of 320 acres. These material sites are located on rights-of-way issued in perpetuity and may be developed at the discretion of the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT).

Mitigation designed to protect the desert tortoise and its habitat will be required for any surface disturbing actions and will include the following measures at a minimum:

- 1) Prior to sand and gravel removal, a site specific survey will be conducted to determine tortoise occurrence.
- 2) The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be consulted (Section 7).
- 3) In Category I and II areas no net loss of habitat will be allowed. This will require acquisition of or enhancement of existing habitat to replace habitat lost through disturbance. This may also require providing replacement material sites for NDOT outside of the crucial tortoise habitat.
- 4) Relocation of individual tortoises at risk to new locations. (Note to reader - Relocation of tortoise has not generally proved successful and is not generally favored by the Fish and Wildlife Service as a primary mitigating measure.)
- 5) Fencing of material sites to prevent tortoises from entering.
- 6) Rehabilitation of disturbed sites to restore damaged habitat.

"No net loss of habitat" refers to tortoise habitat in all of southern Nevada. Therefore, habitat lost due to actions within WSAs, whether designated wilderness or not, may be mitigated within the WSA or on lands elsewhere in southern Nevada which provide tortoise habitat. Similarly, habitat within WSAs could be enhanced to offset habitat losses in other areas. Both cases will depend on site specific environmental analysis and mitigating measures developed in response to a specific activity proposal.

### **Energy Resource Actions**

Exploration for and development of energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) would not occur due to withdrawal of the designated wilderness areas from mineral leasing and entry.

### **Recreation Management Actions**

The WSA would be closed to cross country motorized recreational pursuits such as off-road vehicle driving, vehicle camping, and vehicular access for rockhounding, hunting and trapping. This would eliminate about 45 visits per year within the WSA. Non-motorized recreation is projected to increase from 15 to 30 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting, trapping and rockhounding.

### **Grazing Management Actions**

The Fish and Wildlife No. 1 WSA lies within one grazing allotment, the Arrow Canyon Allotment (ephemeral). This allotment has one permittee. Approximately ten percent of the Arrow Canyon Allotment is located within the WSA. The portion of the Arrow Canyon Allotment located within the WSA would utilize an estimated 30 AUMs for cattle. No range improvements exist within or are proposed for the WSA.

### **Wildlife Management Actions**

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Rangeland Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the U. S. The 11,090 acres of crucial habitat in the WSA has been preliminarily categorized as Category I desert tortoise habitat (see Appendix A). Category I and II habitats require extremely intensive management practices in order to maintain viable populations of desert tortoise. Categorization replaces the existing

crucial/noncrucial habitat classification.

**Realty Management Actions**

The projected development of utilities and the establishment of a utility corridor would not occur due to wilderness designation.

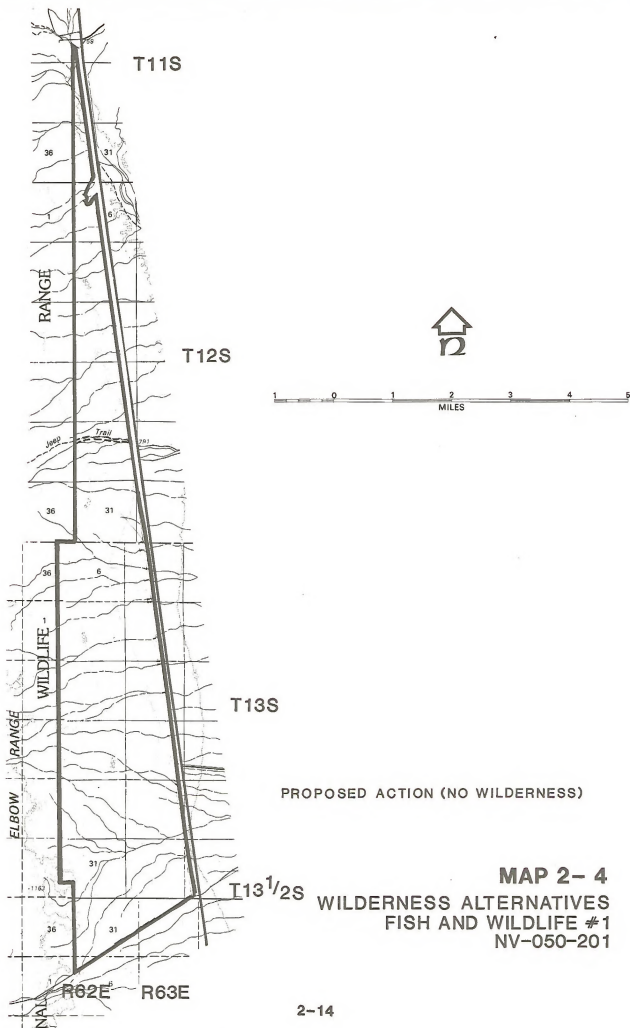


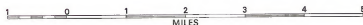
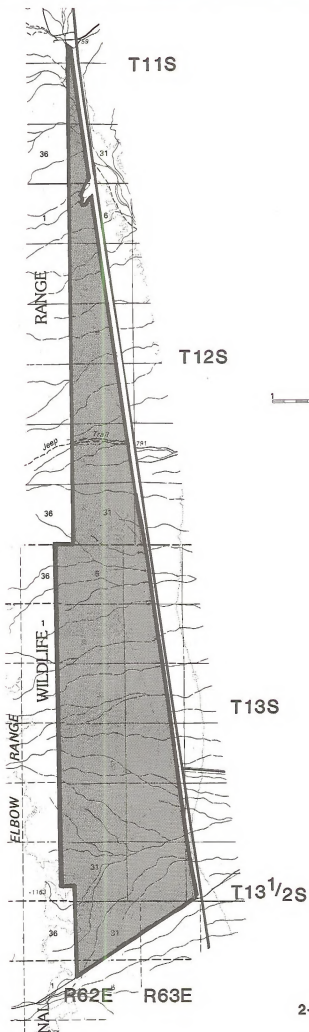
Table 2-2

## Comparative Summary of the Impacts by Alternative - Fish and Wildlife #1

IMPACT TOPIC	PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)	ALL WILDERNESS
Impacts on Wilderness Values	Projected development of utilities, motorized recreational vehicle use, extraction of sand and gravel and mineral exploration are projected to physically disturb an estimated 823 acres. The visual perception of naturalness would be impaired on the entire WSA. Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation within the entire WSA would be diminished and, in some instances lost due to audio and visual distractions.	Extraction of sand and gravel is projected to physically disturb an estimated 320 acres. The visual perception of naturalness would be impaired on the entire WSA. Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation within the entire WSA would be diminished during periods of active sand and gravel operations due to audio and visual distractions.
Impacts on Exploration for, and development of Non-Energy Mineral Resources	All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. No adverse impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources is anticipated.	Exploration for and development of mineral resources would be foregone within the WSA due to a withdrawal from mineral entry. 320 acres would be developed by the state for sand and gravel extraction on existing material sites.
Impacts on Motorized Recreational Use	Motorized recreational use would increase under the Proposed Action. No adverse impacts to this use is expected to occur.	Motorized recreational use of 45 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.
Impacts on Development of Utilities	The proposed action would allow the development of five transmission lines in the WSA, however, four buried utility lines would not be developed because of unacceptable impacts on desert tortoise in Category I habitat.	Under the All Wilderness Alternative, utilities could not be developed within the WSA.
Impacts on Existing Material Site Rights-of-Way	No impact to existing material site rights-of-way.	No impact to existing material site rights-of-way.
Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species Desert Tortoise	823 acres of Category I desert tortoise habitat would be lost due to utility development, sand and gravel extraction, motorized recreational use and mineral exploration.	320 acres of Category I habitat would be lost due to the extraction of sand and gravel from existing material sites.







ALL WILDERNESS  
RECOMMENDED SUITABLE

**MAP 2- 5**  
ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE  
FISH AND WILDLIFE #1  
NV-050-201

## FISH AND WILDLIFE NO. 2 WSA (NV-050-216)

### PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative)

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 17,242 acre area as unsuitable for wilderness designation. (Map 2-6).

### Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions

The 17,242 acres of Fish and Wildlife No. 2 would remain open to all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. Exploration for and development of metallic or nonmetallic minerals is not expected to occur within the WSA due to geologic conditions unfavorable to the accumulation of these minerals, the absence of mining claims and prospecting activity, and a poor marketable location.

### Energy Resource Actions

Exploration for and development of energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) is not projected due to low favorability for the occurrence of energy resources and a historic lack of interest in the area.

### Recreation Management Actions

Motorized recreational use would continue as specified in the Clark County Management Framework Plan (MFP) which limits the type and location of competitive high speed events. Motorized recreational use would be limited to designated roads and trails to protect crucial (Category I) desert tortoise habitat. Motorized recreational uses are projected to increase from an estimated 75 to 125 visits annually.

Non-motorized recreation use is currently estimated at 15 visits annually. It is projected that this use would increase to 25 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting, trapping and rockhounding.

### Grazing Management Actions

The Fish and Wildlife No. 2 WSA lies within two grazing allotments, the Arrow Canyon Allotment (ephemeral) and the Pittman Well Allotment (not permitted). Each allotment has one permittee. Approximately 10 percent of the Arrow Canyon Allotment and 17 percent of the Pittman Well Allotment are within the WSA. The portion of the Arrow Canyon Allotment located within the WSA would utilize an estimated 30 AUMs for cattle. The entire Pittman Well Allotment has been withdrawn from grazing during the past 5 years and an application for ephemeral use is not projected. There are no existing or proposed range improvements in the WSA.

### Wildlife Management Actions

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Rangeland Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the U. S. The 11,007 acres of crucial habitat in the WSA has been preliminarily categorized as Category I desert tortoise habitat (see Appendix A). Category I and II habitats require extremely intensive management practices in order to maintain viable populations of desert tortoise. Categorization replaces the existing crucial/noncrucial habitat classification.

The WSA contains bighorn sheep habitat within the Elbow Mountain Range and Hidden Valley. The development of two waters for the bighorn sheep within these portions of the WSA are being proposed by the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) in a Habitat Management Plan. If suitable terrain is found, each water development would utilize a natural slickrock apron. Should natural slickrock not be found, a 30' by 50' camouflaged corrugated tin apron would be placed on the ground. Two painted 1,600 gallon storage tanks would be associated with each of the water developments.

### Reality Management Actions

Under the Proposed Action utilities would be developed within the WSA. The construction of five 500 kv transmission lines is projected within a utility corridor one mile wide, extending the 11 mile length of the WSA. This projection does not include four buried utility lines (two gas and two fiber optic) included in the draft EIS proposed action projection. It was determined, following additional analysis of the desert tortoise habitat issue, that the impacts resulting from construction of these four lines could not be allowed in a

Category I tortoise habitat area so they have been deleted.

Specific mitigating measures designed to protect the desert tortoise and minimize impacts to tortoise habitat will include at a minimum:

- 1) Prior to any construction being authorized, a site specific inventory will be conducted to determine the amount of habitat involved, the number of animals at risk and the cumulative effect of proposed and existing projects.
- 2) The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be consulted (Section 7).
- 3) Access road and tower site locations will be located (or relocated) to avoid impacting tortoises.
- 4) In Category I and II areas no net loss of habitat will be allowed. This will require acquisition of new or enhancement of existing habitat to replace habitat lost through disturbance.
- 5) Relocation of individual tortoises at risk to new locations. (Note to reader - Relocation of tortoise has not generally proved successful and is not generally favored by the Fish and Wildlife Service as a primary mitigating measure.)
- 6) Fencing of specific locations (material sites, exploration trenches, etc.) to prevent tortoises from entering disturbed areas.
- 7) Access will be limited to one road within the corridor to be used by all right-of-way holders. Access to individual tower locations will be by the shortest and/or least tortoise impacting route off the common access road.
- 8) Tower to tower travel during survey, design, construction and future maintenance will not be allowed except on the common access road, approved spur roads and in areas cleared for usage as a result of the site specific inventory.
- 9) Rehabilitation of disturbed sites to restore damaged habitat.

"No net loss of habitat" refers to tortoise habitat in all of southern Nevada. Therefore, habitat lost due to actions within WSAs, whether designated wilderness or not, may be mitigated within the WSA or on lands elsewhere in southern Nevada which provide tortoise habitat. Similarly, habitat within WSAs could be enhanced to offset habitat losses in other areas. Both cases will depend on site specific environmental analysis and mitigating measures developed in response to a specific activity proposal.

#### **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

All 17,242 acres of public land in the Fish and Wildlife No. 2 WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation. (Map 2-7).

#### **Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions**

Subject to valid existing rights, the 17,242 acres of the Fish and Wildlife No. 2 WSA recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. Exploration for and development of potential mineral resources are not projected to occur due to low favorability for mineral occurrence.

#### **Energy Resource Actions**

Exploration for and development of energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) would not occur due to a low favorability for the occurrence of energy resources and withdrawal of the designated wilderness from mineral leasing and entry.

#### **Recreation Management Actions**

The WSA would be closed to cross country motorized recreational pursuits such as off-road vehicle driving, vehicle camping, and vehicular access for rockhounding, hunting and trapping. This would eliminate about 75 visits per year within the WSA.

Non-motorized recreation is projected to increase from 15 to 50 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting, trapping and rockhounding.

#### **Grazing Management Actions**

The Fish and Wildlife No. 2 WSA lies within two grazing allotments, the Arrow Canyon Allotment (ephemeral) and the Pittman Well Allotment (not permitted). Each allotment has one permittee. Approximately 10 percent of the Arrow Canyon Allotment and 17 percent of the Pittman Well Allotment are within the WSA. The portion of the Arrow Canyon Allotment located within the WSA would utilize an estimated 30 AUMs for cattle. The entire Pittman Well Allotment has been withdrawn from grazing for the past 5 years and an application for ephemeral use is not projected. There are no existing or proposed range improvements in the WSA.

#### **Wildlife Management Actions**

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Rangeland Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the U. S. The 11,007 acres of crucial habitat in the WSA has been preliminarily categorized as Category I desert tortoise habitat (see Appendix A). Category I and II habitats require extremely intensive management practices in order to maintain viable populations of desert tortoise. Categorization replaces the existing crucial/noncrucial habitat classification.

The WSA contains bighorn sheep habitat within the Elbow Mountain Range and Hidden Valley. The development of two waters for the bighorn sheep within these portions of the WSA are being proposed by the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) in a Habitat Management Plan. If suitable terrain is found, each water development would utilize a natural slickrock apron. Should natural slickrock not be found, a 30' by 50' camouflaged corrugated tin apron would be placed on the ground. Two painted 1,600 gallon storage tanks would be associated with each of the water developments.

#### **Realty Management Actions**

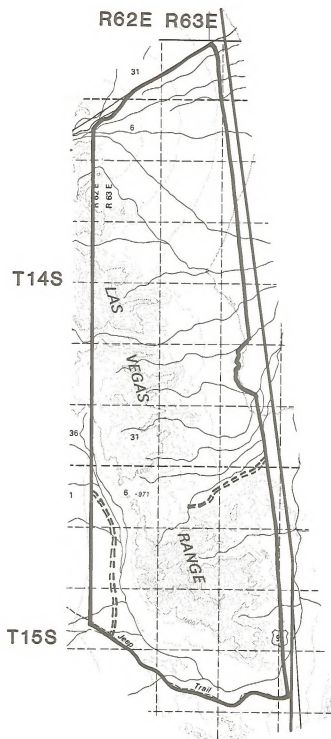
The projected development of utilities and the establishment of a utility corridor would not occur due to wilderness designation.

Table 2-3

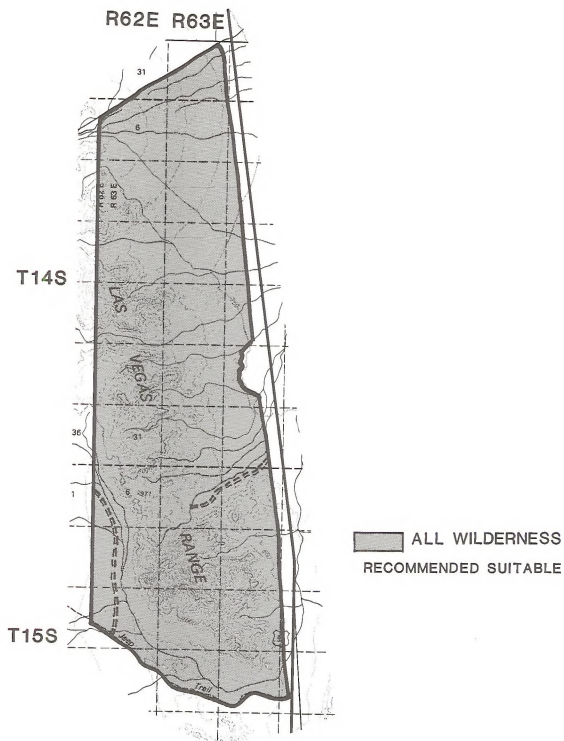
## Comparative Summary of the Impacts by Alternative - Fish and Wildlife #2

IMPACT TOPIC	PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)	ALL WILDERNESS
Impacts on Wilderness Values	Projected development of utilities and motorized recreational vehicle use are projected to physically disturb an estimated 400 acres. The visual perception of naturalness would be impaired on the entire WSA. Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation within the entire WSA would be diminished and, in some instances lost due to audio and visual distractions.	Designating the WSA as wilderness would preserve wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities that exist for solitude, and would enhance the protection of desert tortoise.
Impacts on Levels of Motorized Recreational Use	Motorized recreational use would increase under the Proposed Action. No adverse impacts to this use is expected to occur.	Motorized recreational use of 75 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.
Impacts on Development of Utilities	The proposed action would allow the development of five transmission lines in the WSA, however, four buried utility lines would not be developed because of unacceptable impacts on desert tortoise in Category I habitat.	Under the All Wilderness Alternative, utilities could not be developed within the WSA.
Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise	400 acres of Category I desert tortoise habitat would be lost due to utility development and motorized recreational use.	Category I habitat would be preserved within the WSA.





**MAP 2- 6**  
**WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVES**  
**FISH AND WILDLIFE #2**  
**NV-050-216**



## MAP 2- 7

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE  
FISH AND WILDLIFE #2  
NV-050-216

## FISH AND WILDLIFE NO. 3 WSA (NV-050-217)

### PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative)

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 22,002 acre area as unsuitable for wilderness designation. (Map 2-8).

### Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions

The 22,002 acres of Fish and Wildlife No. 2 would remain open to all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. Exploration for and development of metallic or nonmetallic minerals is not expected to occur within the WSA due to geologic conditions unfavorable to the accumulation of these minerals, the absence of mining claims and prospecting activity, and a poor marketable location.

Extraction of sand and gravel from one existing (but so far unused) is projected and will result in the disturbance of 40 acres. The existing material site is located on a right-of-way issued in perpetuity and may be developed at the discretion of the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT).

Mitigation designed to protect the desert tortoise and its habitat will be required for any surface disturbing actions and will include the following measures at a minimum:

- 1) Prior to the approval of any plan of operations a site specific survey will be conducted to determine tortoise occurrence.
- 2) The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be consulted (Section 7).
- 3) In Category I and II areas no net loss of habitat will be allowed. This will require acquisition of or enhancement of existing habitat to replace habitat lost through disturbance. This may also require providing replacement material sites for NDOT outside of the crucial tortoise habitat.
- 4) Relocation of individual tortoises at risk to new locations. (Note to reader - Relocation of tortoise has not generally proved successful and is not generally favored by the Fish and Wildlife Service as a primary mitigating measure.)
- 5) Fencing of specific locations (material sites, exploration trenches, etc.) to prevent tortoises from entering disturbed areas.
- 6) Designation of travel routes and closure areas to avoid motorized use in areas of crucial habitat.
- 7) Rehabilitation of disturbed sites to restore damaged habitat.

"No net loss of habitat" refers to tortoise habitat in all of southern Nevada. Therefore, habitat lost due to actions within WSAs, whether designated wilderness or not, may be mitigated within the WSA or on lands elsewhere in southern Nevada which provide tortoise habitat. Similarly, habitat within WSAs could be enhanced to offset habitat losses in other areas. Both cases will depend on site specific environmental analysis and mitigating measures developed in response to a specific activity proposal.

### Energy Resource Actions

Exploration for and development of energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) is not projected due to low favorability for the occurrence of energy resources and a historic lack of interest in the area.

### Recreation Management Actions

Motorized recreational use would continue as specified in the Clark County Management Framework Plan (MFP) which limits the type and location of competitive high speed events. Motorized recreational use would be limited to designated roads and trails to protect crucial (Category I) desert tortoise habitat. Motorized recreational uses are projected to increase from an estimated 60 to 105 visits annually.

Non-motorized recreation use is currently estimated at 10 visits annually. It is projected that this use would increase to 15 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting, trapping and rockhounding.

### Grazing Management Actions

The Fish and Wildlife No. 3 WSA lies within two grazing allotments, Pittman Well Allotment (non-use) and

the Dry Lake Allotment (ephemeral). Each allotment has one permittee. Approximately 44 percent of the Pittman Well Allotment and 7 percent of the Dry Lake Allotment are within the WSA. The portion of the Dry Lake Allotment located within the WSA would utilize an estimated 14 AUMs for cattle. The Pittman Well Allotment has not been actively grazed for the past five years and an application for ephemeral use is not projected. No range projects exist or are proposed within the WSA.

#### **Wildlife Management Actions**

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Range-wide Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the U. S. The 19,812 acres of crucial habitat in the WSA has been preliminarily categorized as Category I desert tortoise habitat (see Appendix A). Category I and II habitats require extremely intensive management practices in order to maintain viable populations of desert tortoise. Categorization replaces the existing crucial/noncrucial habitat classification.

#### **Realty Management Actions**

Under the Proposed Action utilities would be developed within the WSA. The construction of five 500 kv transmission lines is projected within a utility corridor one mile wide, extending the 18 mile length of the WSA. This projection does not include four buried utility lines (two gas and two fiber optic) included in the draft EIS proposed action projection. It was determined, following additional analysis of the desert tortoise habitat issue, that the impacts resulting from construction of these four lines could not be allowed in a Category I tortoise habitat area so they have been deleted.

Specific mitigating measures designed to protect the desert tortoise and minimize impacts to tortoise habitat will include at a minimum:

- 1) Prior to any construction being authorized, a site specific inventory will be conducted to determine the amount of habitat involved, the number of animals at risk and the cumulative effect of proposed and existing projects.
- 2) The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be consulted (Section 7).
- 3) Access road and tower site locations will be located (or relocated) to avoid impacting tortoises.
- 4) In Category I and II areas no net loss of habitat will be allowed. This will require acquisition of new or enhancement of existing habitat to replace habitat lost through disturbance.
- 5) Relocation of individual tortoises at risk to new locations. (Note to reader - Relocation of tortoise has not generally proved successful and is not generally favored by the Fish and Wildlife Service as a primary mitigating measure.)
- 6) Fencing of specific locations (material sites, exploration trenches, etc.) to prevent tortoises from entering disturbed areas.
- 7) Access will be limited to one road within the corridor to be used by all right-of-way holders. Access to individual tower locations will be by the shortest and/or least tortoise impacting route off the common access road.
- 8) Tower to tower travel during survey, design, construction and future maintenance will not be allowed except on the common access road, approved spur roads and in areas cleared for usage as a result of the site specific inventory.
- 9) Rehabilitation of disturbed sites to restore damaged habitat.

"No net loss of habitat" refers to tortoise habitat in all of southern Nevada. Therefore, habitat lost due to actions within WSAs, whether designated wilderness or not, may be mitigated within the WSA or on lands elsewhere in southern Nevada which provide tortoise habitat. Similarly, habitat within WSAs could be enhanced to offset habitat losses in other areas. Both cases will depend on site specific environmental analysis and mitigating measures developed in response to a specific activity proposal.

#### **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

All 22,002 acres of public land in the Fish and Wildlife No. 3 WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-9).

#### **Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions**

Subject to valid existing rights, the 17,242 acres of the Fish and Wildlife No. 2 WSA recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. Exploration for and development of potential mineral resources are not projected to occur due to low favorability for mineral occurrence.

Extraction of sand and gravel from the existing (but so far unused) material site is projected and will result in the disturbance of 40 acres. This material site is located on a right-of-way issued in perpetuity and may be developed at the discretion of the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT).

Mitigation designed to protect the desert tortoise and its habitat will be required for any surface disturbing actions and will include the following measures at a minimum:

- 1) Prior to sand and gravel removal, a site specific survey will be conducted to determine tortoise occurrence.
- 2) The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be consulted (Section 7).
- 3) In Category I and II areas no net loss of habitat will be allowed. This will require acquisition of new or enhancement of existing habitat to replace habitat lost through disturbance. This may also require providing replacement material sites for NDOT outside of the crucial tortoise habitat.
- 4) Relocation of individual tortoises at risk to new locations. (Note to reader - Relocation of tortoise has not generally proved successful and is not generally favored by the Fish and Wildlife Service as a primary mitigating measure.)
- 5) Fencing of material sites to prevent tortoises from entering.
- 6) Rehabilitation of disturbed sites to restore damaged habitat.

"No net loss of habitat" refers to tortoise habitat in all of southern Nevada. Therefore, habitat lost due to actions within WSAs, whether designated wilderness or not, may be mitigated within the WSA or on lands elsewhere in southern Nevada which provide tortoise habitat. Similarly, habitat within WSAs could be enhanced to offset habitat losses in other areas. Both cases will depend on site specific environmental analysis and mitigating measures developed in response to a specific activity proposal.

#### **Energy Resource Actions**

Exploration for and development of energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) would not occur due to withdrawal of the designated wilderness area from mineral leasing and entry.

#### **Recreation Management Actions**

The WSA would be closed to cross country motorized recreational pursuits such as off-road vehicle driving, vehicle camping, and vehicular access for rockhounding, hunting and trapping. This would eliminate about 60 visits per year within the WSA.

Nonmotorized recreation is projected to increase from 10 to 30 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting, trapping and rockhounding.

#### **Grazing Management Actions**

The Fish and Wildlife No. 3 WSA lies within two grazing allotments, Pittman Well Allotment (non-use) and the Dry Lake Allotment (ephemeral). Each allotment has one permittee. Approximately 44 percent of the Pittman Well Allotment and 7 percent of the Dry Lake Allotment are within the WSA. The portion of the Dry Lake Allotment located within the WSA would utilize an estimated 14 AUMs for cattle. The Pittman Well Allotment has not been actively grazed for the past five years and an application for ephemeral use is not projected. No range projects exist or are proposed within the WSA.

#### **Wildlife Management Actions**

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public

Lands: A Rangewide Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the U. S. The 19,812 acres of crucial habitat in the WSA has been preliminarily categorized as Category I desert tortoise habitat (see Appendix A). Category I and II habitats require extremely intensive management practices in order to maintain viable populations of desert tortoise. Categorization replaces the existing crucial/noncrucial habitat classification.

**Realty Management Actions**

The projected development of utilities and the establishment of a utility corridor would not occur due to wilderness designation.

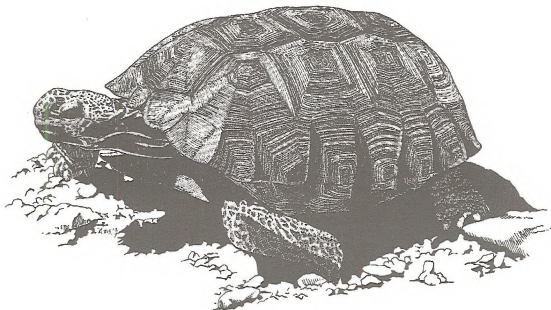




Table 2-4

## Comparative Summary of the Impacts by Alternative - Fish and Wildlife #3

IMPACT TOPIC	PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)	ALL WILDERNESS
Impacts on Wilderness Values	Projected development of utilities, motorized recreational vehicle use, extraction of sand and gravel and mineral exploration are projected to physically disturb an estimated 696 acres. The visual perception of naturalness would be impaired on the entire WSA. Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation within the entire WSA would be diminished and, in some instances lost due to audio and visual distractions.	Designating the WSA as wilderness would preserve wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities that exist for solitude, and would enhance the protection of the desert tortoise and the sensitive plant. Activities related to the authorized extraction of sand and gravel and unauthorized vehicle use would impair naturalness qualities over approximately 50 acres of the WSA.
Impacts on Levels of Motorized Recreational Use	Motorized recreational use would increase under the Proposed Action. No adverse impacts to this use is expected to occur.	Motorized recreational use of 60 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.
Impacts on Development of Utilities	The proposed action would allow the development of five transmission lines in the WSA. Four buried utility lines would not be developed because of unacceptable impacts on desert tortoise in Category I habitat. Special considerations would be given to the penstemon population.	Under the All Wilderness Alternative, utilities could not be developed within the WSA.
Impacts on Existing Material Site Rights-of-Way	No impact to existing material site rights-of-way.	No impact to existing material site rights-of-way.
Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise	696 acres of Category I desert tortoise habitat would be lost due to utility development, sand and gravel extraction, and motorized recreational use.	Category I desert tortoise habitat would be preserved within the WSA except for an estimated 50 acres of which would be lost due to the extraction of sand and gravel from an existing material site.

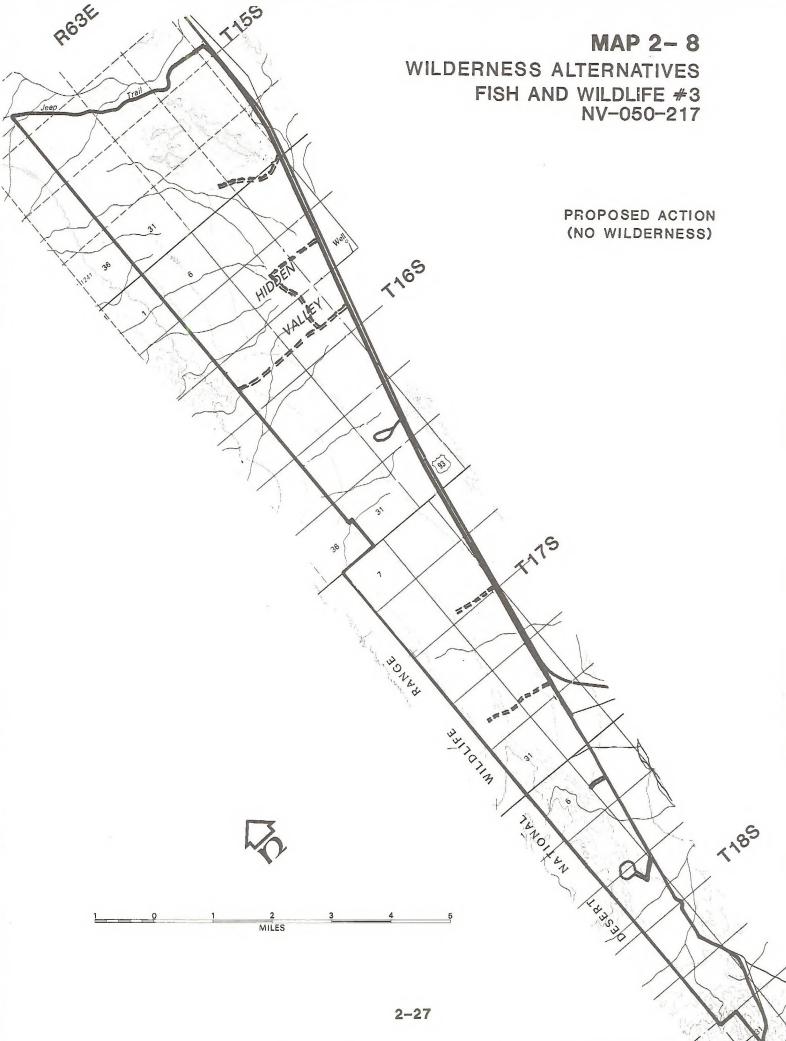
## MAP 2- 8

### WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVES

#### FISH AND WILDLIFE #3

NV-050-217

PROPOSED ACTION  
(NO WILDERNESS)



R63E

T15S

**MAP 2- 9**

**ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE  
FISH AND WILDLIFE #3  
NV-050-217**

 **ALL WILDERNESS  
RECOMMENDED SUITABLE**

T16S

T17S

T18S



1 0 1 2 3 4 5  
MILES

## LIME CANYON WSA (NV-050-231)

### PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness Alternative)

Under the Proposed Action, 13,895 acres out of a total of 34,680 acres of public land, would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation. The remaining 20,785 acres of public land would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-10).

### Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions

Subject to valid existing rights, the 13,895 acres of the Lime Canyon WSA recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. Exploration for and development of potential minerals are not projected within the recommended suitable area because of a low favorability for the occurrence of metallic minerals and only moderate favorability for the occurrence of non-metallic minerals (limestone, dolomite, gypsum) (GEM 1983) as evidenced by the lack of any mining claims in the recommended suitable area. Areas offering better mineral potential for exploration and development exist outside the recommended suitable portion of the WSA.

The 20,785 acres of the Lime Canyon WSA recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open to all forms of appropriation under the mining laws. As of 1987, 5 claims covering approximately 100 acres existed within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. The nonsuitable portion of the WSA has a low favorability for the occurrence of metallic minerals and moderate favorability for the occurrence of non-metallic minerals (limestone, dolomite, and gypsum) (GEM 1983).

The expansion of two gypsum mines is projected to occur within the eastern portion of the nonsuitable area. These would be extensions of existing mines developed on the three patented claims located within the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA. A total of 620 acres of surface disturbance, including 10 miles of access construction, auxiliary facilities, shops and the extraction of gypsum, are projected to occur within the Lime Canyon WSA. Processing facilities for both mines would be located outside the WSA.

Mitigation designed to assess potential impacts to the gila monster and to protect the scenic values of Lime Ridge will be required for any surface disturbing actions and will include the following measures at a minimum:

- 1) A site specific survey to determine if the gila monster sighting in 1980 indicates the area is crucial gila monster habitat.
- 2) Relocation of gila monsters at risk.
- 3) Acquisition of new or enhancement of existing habitat to replace habitat lost through disturbance.
- 4) A visual rating of the Lime Ridge scenic quality and a plan for recontouring of the ridge line.

### Energy Resource Actions

Exploration for and development of energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) would not occur due to withdrawal of the designated wilderness area from mineral leasing and entry and a low favorability for the occurrence of energy resources (GEM 1983). Presently, no oil and gas leases exist within this portion of the WSA.

The nonsuitable portion of the WSA is also considered to have low favorability for the occurrence of energy resources (GEM 1983) and no oil and gas leases exist within this portion of the WSA. However, based on current energy exploration activity occurring outside the WSA, it is projected that one exploratory well would be drilled along the WSA's eastern border. Surface disturbance from the projected well would total approximately 4.5 acres, involving 3 acres for a well pad cleared of surface vegetation and topsoil, and 1 mile of access road. Neither a producing oil well or oil field are projected to occur within the WSA, nor is any further geophysical exploration.

### **Recreation Management Actions**

The 13,895 acre suitable portion of the Lime Canyon WSA would be closed to cross country motorized recreational pursuits such as off-road vehicle sightseeing, vehicle camping, and vehicular access for hunting and trapping. This would eliminate about 30 visits per year within the recommended suitable area.

Non-motorized recreation would continue to increase from an estimated 35 to about 170 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting, trapping, sightseeing and hiking. Motorized recreational use could continue within the 20,785 acre nonsuitable portion of the WSA. The area would be managed through an off-road vehicle management plan and designation (limited use) as specified in the Clark County Management Framework Plan (MFP). Motorized travel within the nonsuitable area would be limited to roads, ways and washes and competition would be limited to non-speed events. Motorized recreational uses are projected to increase from an estimated 150 to 230 visits annually.

Non-motorized recreational use would continue within the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA. Visitation within this portion of the WSA is projected to increase from an estimated 25 to 35 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting and trapping.

### **Grazing Management Actions**

The Lime Canyon WSA lies within one grazing allotment, the Gold Butte Allotment (ephemeral). The portion of the Gold Butte Allotment located within the recommended suitable area would utilize an estimated 218 AUMs for cattle and 215 AUMs for burros. Approximately 20 percent of the Gold Butte Allotment, which has one permittee, is located within the WSA.

The portion of the Gold Butte Allotment located within the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA would utilize an estimated 328 AUMs for cattle and 323 AUMs for burros.

One small gap fence, crossing the mouth of Lime Canyon, is located within the suitable portion of the WSA. No other range improvements exist or are proposed for development within the suitable area. One fence line, one developed spring and a small earthen reservoir are located within the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA. No new range improvements are proposed for this portion of the WSA.

### **Wildlife Management Actions**

Maintenance of the two existing upland game bird water developments which supplement the excellent habitat for Gambel's quail in the WSA would be accomplished without the use of motorized equipment. No additional water development projects are proposed for the WSA.

Bighorn sheep may be released into the WSA's potential year long bighorn sheep habitat. A 1983 bighorn sheep release plan identified release sites within the WSA. Release of bighorn sheep within the WSA may require the implementation of three water development projects. If suitable terrain is found, each water development would utilize a natural slickrock apron. Should natural slickrock not be found, a 30' by 50' camouflaged corrugated tin apron would be placed on the ground. Two painted 1,600 gallon storage tanks would be associated with each of the three bighorn sheep water developments.

Two of the water development projects would be located within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA. The water developments would be constructed and maintained yearly with out the use of motorized equipment. The third guzzler would be located within the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA.

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Rangelwide Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the U.S. (Appendix A). An initial categorization has been completed (8/89) which did not classify any of the Lime Canyon WSA as either Category I, II or III desert tortoise habitat. Since desert tortoise habitat does exist two miles north and east of the WSA, future population studies may lead to formal categorization.

### **Realty Management Actions**

Located within the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA are three separate patented mining claims totalling 838 acres. It is projected that the private land owners would exercise their rights of access to their patented claims. Rights-of-way would be issued for access to these private lands. Approximately 1 mile of access routes, disturbing about 3 acres, would be constructed within the WSA. These routes would become part of the mining development projected to occur within the WSA.

### **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

All 34,680 acres of public land in the Lime Canyon WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-11).

### **Non-Energy Mineral Resources Actions**

Subject to valid existing rights, the 34,680 acres of the Lime Canyon WSA recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. If plans of operation are received for the five existing claims in the WSA, a validity exam would be conducted.

Assuming that the mining claims prove valid, two gypsum mines are projected to occur within the eastern portion of the WSA. These mines would be extensions of existing mines developed on the three patented claims located within the study area. A total of 600 acres of surface disturbance, including 6 miles of access construction and the extraction of gypsum, are projected to occur within the Lime Canyon WSA.

Mitigation designed to assess potential impacts to the gila monster and to protect the scenic values of Lime Ridge will be required for any surface disturbing actions and will include the following measures at a minimum:

- 1) A site specific survey to determine if the gila monster sighting in 1980 indicates the area is crucial gila monster habitat.
- 2) Relocation of gila monsters at risk.
- 3) Acquisition of new or enhancement of existing habitat to replace habitat lost through disturbance.
- 4) A visual rating of the Lime Ridge scenic quality and a plan for recontouring of the ridge line.
- 5) Consider locating auxiliary and processing facilities outside the WSA.

### **Energy Resource Actions**

Exploration for and development of energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) would not occur due to withdrawal of the designated wilderness area from mineral leasing and entry.

### **Recreation Management Actions**

The WSA, including 12.7 miles of ways and 6 miles of roads associated with projected mineral activity, would be closed to cross country motorized recreational pursuits such as off-road vehicle driving, vehicle camping and vehicular access for hunting, trapping and rock collecting. This would eliminate about 180 visits per year within the WSA.

Nonmotorized recreation is projected to increase from 60 to 190 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting, trapping, rockhounding and hiking/nature study.

### **Grazing Management Actions**

The Lime Canyon WSA lies within one grazing allotment, the Gold Butte Allotment (ephemeral). The portion of the Gold Butte Allotment located within the WSA would utilize an estimated 546 AUMs for cattle and 538 AUMs for burros. Approximately 20 percent of the Gold Butte Allotment, which has one permittee, is located in the WSA.

Existing range improvements within the WSA consist of two fence lines, one developed spring and a small earthen reservoir. These range improvements would require yearly maintenance with horses or low impact



cross-country motorized vehicles. No new range projects are proposed for development within the WSA.

#### **Wildlife Management Actions**

Maintenance of the two existing upland game bird water developments which supplement the excellent habitat for Gambel's quail in the WSA would be accomplished without the use of motorized equipment. No additional water development projects are proposed for the WSA.

The Lime Canyon WSA offers potential year long bighorn sheep habitat. A 1983 bighorn sheep release plan identified release sites within the WSA. Release of bighorn sheep within the WSA may require the implementation of three water development projects. If suitable terrain is found, each water development would utilize a natural slickrock apron. Should natural slickrock not be found, a 30' by 50' camouflaged corrugated tin apron would be placed on the ground. Two painted 1,600 gallon storage tanks would be associated with each of the three water developments. The construction and yearly maintenance of the water development projects would be done without the use of motorized equipment.

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Rangeland Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the U.S. (Appendix A). An initial categorization has been completed (8/89) which did not classify any of the Lime Canyon WSA as either Category I, II or III desert tortoise habitat. Since desert tortoise habitat does exist two miles north and east of the WSA, future population studies may lead to formal categorization of this area.

#### **Realty Management Actions**

Located within the WSA are three separate patented mining claims totaling 838 acres. It is projected that the private land owners would exercise their rights of access to their patented claims. Rights-of-way would be issued for access to these private lands. Approximately 1 mile of access routes, disturbing about 3 acres, would be constructed within the WSA. These routes would become part of the mining development projected to occur within the WSA.

#### **NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE (No Action Alternative)**

The No Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 34,680 acre area as nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-11).

#### **Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions**

The 34,680 acres of the Lime Canyon WSA recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open to all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. Despite a low favorability for the occurrence of metallic minerals and only a moderate favorability for the occurrence of non-metallic minerals (limestone, dolomite, gypsum) (GEM 1983), the expansion of two gypsum mines is projected to occur within the eastern portion of the WSA. The two mines would be extensions of existing mines developed on the three patented claims located within the study area. A total of 620 acres of surface disturbance, including 10 miles of access construction, auxiliary facilities, shops and extraction of gypsum, are projected to occur within the Lime Canyon WSA. Processing facilities for both mines would be located outside the WSA.

Mitigation designed to assess potential impacts to the gila monster and to protect the scenic values of Lime Ridge will be required for any surface disturbing actions and will include the following measures at a minimum:

- 1) A site specific survey to determine if the gila monster sighting in 1980 indicates the area is crucial gila monster habitat.
- 2) Relocation of gila monsters at risk.
- 3) Acquisition of new or enhancement of existing habitat to replace habitat lost through disturbance.
- 4) A visual rating of the Lime Ridge scenic quality and a plan for recontouring of the ridge line.
- 5) Consider locating auxiliary and processing facilities outside the WSA.

### **Energy Resource Actions**

Based on current energy exploration activity occurring outside the WSA, it is projected that one exploratory well would be drilled along the WSA's eastern border. Surface disturbance from the projected well would total approximately 4.5 acres, involving clearance of surface vegetation and topsoil for well pads on 3 acres and the construction of 1 mile of access road. The Lime Canyon WSA is considered to have low favorability for the occurrence of energy resources (GEM 1983). Presently, no oil and gas leases exist within the WSA. A producing well or an oil field are not projected, nor is any further geophysical exploration within the WSA.

### **Recreation Management Actions**

Motorized recreational use could continue within the WSA. The area would be managed through an off-road vehicle management plan and designation (limited use) as specified in the Clark County Management Framework Plan (MFP). Motorized travel within the WSA would be limited to roads, ways and washes and competition would be limited to non-speed events. Motorized recreational uses are projected to increase from an estimated 180 to 260 visits annually.

Non-motorized recreational use would continue within the WSA under the No Wilderness Alternative. Visitation within the WSA is projected to increase from an estimated 60 to 100 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting, trapping and hiking/nature study.

### **Grazing Management Actions**

The Lime Canyon WSA lies within one grazing allotment, the Gold Butte Allotment (ephemeral). The portion of the Gold Butte Allotment located within the WSA would utilize an estimated 546 AUMs for cattle and 538 AUMs for burros. Approximately 20 percent of the Gold Butte Allotment, which has one permittee, is located in the WSA.

Existing range improvements within the WSA consist of two fence line, one developed spring and a small earthen reservoir. No new range improvements are proposed for development within the WSA.

### **Wildlife Management Actions**

Maintenance of the two existing upland game bird water developments which supplement the excellent habitat for Gambel's quail in the WSA would be accomplished without the use of motorized equipment. No additional water development projects are proposed for the WSA.

The Lime Canyon WSA offers potential year long bighorn sheep habitat. A 1983 bighorn sheep release plan identified release sites within the WSA. Release of bighorn sheep within the WSA may require the implementation of three water development projects. If suitable terrain is found, each water development would utilize a natural slickrock apron. Should natural slickrock not be found, a 30' by 50' camouflaged corrugated tin apron would be placed on the ground. Two painted 1,600 gallon storage tanks would be associated with each of the three water development projects.

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Rangeland Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the U.S. (Appendix A). An initial categorization has been completed (8/89) which did not classify any of the Lime Canyon WSA as either Category I, II or III desert tortoise habitat. Since desert tortoise habitat does exist two miles north and east of the WSA, future population studies may lead to formal categorization of this area.

### **Realty Management Actions**

Located within the WSA's boundaries are three separate patented mining claims totaling 838 acres. It is projected that the private land owners would exercise their rights of access to their patented claims. Rights-of-way would be issued for access to these private lands. Approximately 1 mile of access routes, disturbing about 3 acres, would be constructed within the WSA. These routes would become part of the mining development projected to occur within the WSA.

Table 2-5

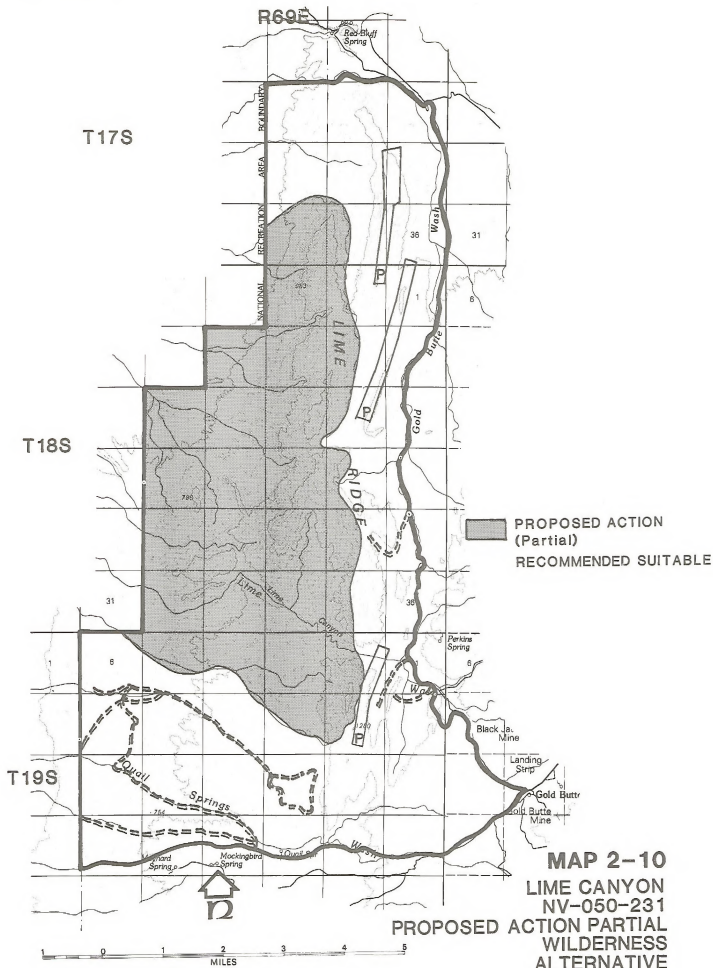
## Comparative Summary of the Impacts by Alternative - Lime Canyon

ISSUE TOPICS	PROPOSED ACTION (PARTIAL WILDERNESS)	ALL WILDERNESS	NO WILDERNESS
Impacts on Wilderness Values	Wilderness values and the special geological value of Lime Canyon would be retained within 12,905 of the 13,895 acres of the recommended suitable portion. Wilderness values on the remaining 985 acres of the suitable area would be diminished and, in some instances lost, due to projected gypsum mining occurring on adjacent public and private lands and occasional unauthorized cross country vehicle use. There would be a loss of wilderness values on the 20,785 acres recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation as continued and increasing cross country recreational vehicle use, projected mineral development, and oil and gas exploration would negatively impact wilderness values. Special features would be afforded some protection through mitigative measures and the implementation of future management actions.	Designation would preserve wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude, and primitive recreation and the special features of the aforementioned Category 2 "Threatened and Endangered" species and Lime Canyon that exist within 17,880 of the WSA's 34,680 acres. Approximately 615 acres within the WSA would be physically disturbed by the projected activity associated with authorized mining and unauthorized vehicle use. The scarification of topography and the sights and sounds from heavy equipment associated with the mining would negatively impact the natural perception, outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and the scenic features of Lime Ridge within approximately 16,800 acres of the WSA.	The sights, sounds and surface disturbances created by increased cross country motorized recreational use, projected mineral development and oil and gas exploration would contribute to the loss of wilderness values on 21,765 acres of the WSA. Special features would be afforded some protection through mitigative measures and the implementation of future management actions. Wilderness values would be retained within the remaining 12,915 acres of the WSA as no surface disturbing activities are projected to occur.
Impacts on Exploration for and Development of Non- Energy Mineral Resources	Exploration and development of gypsum resources would be foregone on unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. However, no mineral exploration or development of these lands is projected. The development of two gypsum mines is projected to occur within the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA.	Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on unclaimed lands within the WSA. The development of two mines is projected to occur within the WSA under the All Wilderness Alternative. As no other mineral exploration or development in the WSA is projected, impacts to mineral resources would not occur.	Mineral resources within the WSA would be available for exploration and development. The development of two mines for gypsum is projected to occur within the WSA. There are no projected adverse impacts on the exploration for and development of mineral resources.

Table 2-5 Continued

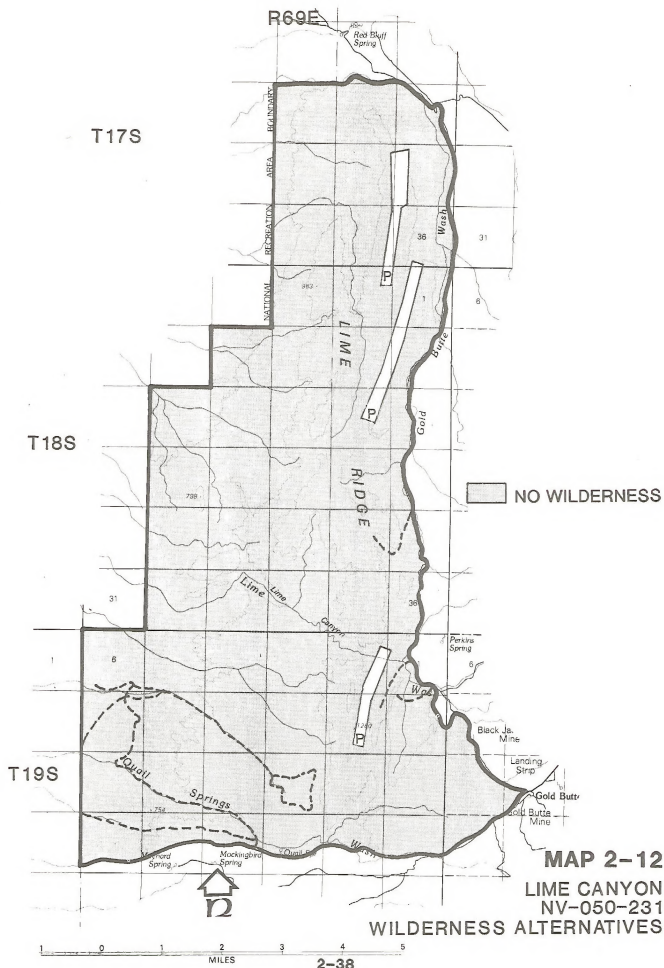
## Comparative Summary of the Impacts by Alternative - Lime Canyon

ISSUE TOPICS	PROPOSED ACTION (PARTIAL WILDERNESS)	ALL WILDERNESS	NO WILDERNESS
Impacts on the Level of Exploration for Oil and Gas	Exploration of potential oil and gas resources would be foregone within the suitable portion of the WSA. However, neither is projected to occur. The exploration of one well is projected within the nonsuitable area; production is not expected.	The exploratory drilling of one oil and gas well projected for the WSA would be foregone.	Oil and gas resources within the WSA would be available for exploration. The drilling of one exploratory well is projected to occur within the WSA. There are no projected adverse impacts on the exploration for energy resources.
Impacts on Motorized Recreational Use	Motorized recreational use would be eliminated on the 13,895 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation and approximately 40 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.	Motorized recreational use of 180 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.	Motorized recreational use would benefit under the No Wilderness Alternative. No adverse impacts to this use is expected to occur.
Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise	The status of tortoise habitat in the area is unknown. Adverse impacts could unknowingly occur until further population studies are conducted.	Tortoise habitat which may exist within the area would be protected by wilderness designation.	The status of tortoise habitat in the area is unknown. Adverse impacts could unknowingly occur until further population studies are conducted.









## MILLION HILLS WSA (NV-050-233)

### PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative)

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 21,296 acre area as unsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-13).

### Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions

The 21,296 acres of the Million Hills WSA recommended as unsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open to all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. Exploration of claims located near the Azure mine is projected. A total of 6.4 acres of surface disturbance primarily associated with 3 miles of road construction, drill pad construction and trenching of test pits is projected to occur as a result of the exploration program.

### Energy Resource Actions

Based on current energy exploration activity occurring outside the WSA, it is projected that two exploratory wells would be drilled within the northwestern portion of the WSA. Surface disturbance from the two projected wells would total approximately 13.5 acres, involving 6 acres for well pads cleared of surface vegetation and topsoil and the construction of 2.5 miles of access road. Neither producing wells nor an oil field are projected, nor is any further geophysical exploration within the WSA. The Million Hills WSA is considered to have low favorability for the occurrence of energy resources (GEM 1983).

Mitigation designed to protect the desert tortoise and its habitat in the northern portion of the WSA will be required for any surface disturbing actions and will include the following measures at a minimum:

- 1) Prior to the approval of any drilling or plan of operations a site specific survey will be conducted to determine tortoise occurrence.
- 2) The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be consulted (Section 7).
- 3) In Category I areas no net loss of habitat will be allowed. This will require acquisition of or enhancement of existing habitat to replace habitat lost through disturbance.
- 4) Relocation of individual tortoises at risk to new locations. (Note to reader - Relocation of tortoise has not generally proved successful and is not generally favored by the Fish and Wildlife Service as a primary mitigating measure.)
- 5) Fencing of specific locations (drilling rigs, mud pits, equipment yards, etc.) to prevent tortoises from entering disturbed areas.
- 6) Designation of travel routes and closure areas to avoid motorized use in areas of crucial habitat.
- 7) Rehabilitation of disturbed sites to restore damaged habitat.

"No net loss of habitat" refers to tortoise habitat in all of southern Nevada. Therefore, habitat lost due to actions within WSAs, whether designated wilderness or not, may be mitigated within the WSA or on lands elsewhere in southern Nevada which provide tortoise habitat. Similarly, habitat within WSAs could be enhanced to offset habitat losses in other areas. Both cases will depend on site specific environmental analysis and mitigating measures developed in response to a specific activity proposal.

### Recreation Management Actions

Motorized recreational use could continue within the WSA. The area would be managed through an off-road vehicle management plan and designation (limited use) as specified in the Clark County Management Framework Plan (MFP). Motorized travel within the WSA would be limited to roads, ways and washes and competition would be limited to non-speed events. Motorized recreational use would also be limited to designated roads and trails to protect crucial (Category I) desert tortoise habitat. Motorized recreational uses are projected to increase from an estimated 150 to 215 visits annually.

Non-motorized recreational use would continue within the WSA under the Proposed Action. Visitation within the WSA is projected to increase from an estimated 50 to 90 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting, trapping and hiking/nature study.

### **Grazing Management Actions**

The Million Hills WSA lies within two grazing allotments, the Gold Butte Allotment (ephemeral) and the Azure Ridge Allotment (ephemeral). The Azure Ridge Allotment lies entirely within the WSA and is managed under an Allotment Management Plan (AMP) administered by the Arizona Strip District. The portion of the Gold Butte Allotment located within the WSA (7%), would utilize an estimated 191 AUMs for cattle and 188 AUMs for burros.

Existing range improvements within the WSA consist of two fence lines and two developed springs. An eight mile fence, extending the length of the WSA, is proposed along the eastern boundary.

### **Wildlife Management Actions**

The Million Hills WSA offers potential year long bighorn sheep habitat. A 1983 bighorn sheep release plan identified release sites within the WSA. Release of bighorn sheep within the WSA may require the implementation of three water development projects. If suitable terrain is found, each water development would utilize a natural slickrock apron. Should natural slickrock not be found, a 30' by 50' camouflaged corrugated tin apron would be placed on the ground. Two painted 1,600 gallon storage tanks would be associated with each of the three water development projects.

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Rangeland Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the U. S. The 8,960 acres of crucial habitat in the WSA has been preliminarily categorized as Category I desert tortoise habitat (see Appendix A). Category I and II habitats require extremely intensive management practices in order to maintain viable populations of desert tortoise. Categorization replaces the existing crucial/noncrucial habitat classification.

### **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

All 21,296 acres of public land in the Million Hills WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-14).

### **Non-Energy Mineral Resources Actions**

Subject to valid existing rights, the 21,296 acres of the Million Hills WSA recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. Exploration, development, or production of potential mineral resources is not projected to occur under the All Wilderness Alternative. If plans of operation are received for the four existing claims in the WSA, a validity exam would be conducted.

### **Energy Resource Actions**

Exploration for and development of energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) would not occur due to a low favorability for discovery and withdrawal of the designated wilderness area from mineral leasing and entry..

### **Recreation Management Actions**

The WSA, including 4.8 miles of ways, would be closed to cross country motorized recreational pursuits such as off-road vehicle driving, vehicle camping and vehicular access for hunting, trapping and rock collecting. This would eliminate about 150 visits per year within the WSA.

Non-motorized recreation is projected to increase from 50 to 180 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting, trapping, rockhounding and hiking/nature study.

### **Grazing Management Actions**

The Million Hills WSA lies within two grazing allotments, the Gold Butte Allotment (ephemeral) and the Azure Ridge Allotment (ephemeral). The Azure Ridge Allotment lies entirely within the WSA and is managed under an Allotment Management Plan (AMP) administered by the Arizona Strip District. The portion of the Gold Butte Allotment located within the WSA (7%), would utilize an estimated 191 AUMs for cattle and 188 AUMs for burros.

Existing range improvements within the WSA consist of two fence lines and two developed springs. Yearly maintenance of these improvements would require the use of horses and low impact cross-country motorized vehicles. An eight mile fence, extending the length of the WSA, is proposed along the eastern boundary. The construction and maintenance of the fence would be done with non-motorized equipment. This development would be subject to the wilderness protection constraints set forth in the Wilderness Management Policy.

#### **Wildlife Management Actions**

The Million Hills WSA offers potential year long bighorn sheep habitat. A 1983 bighorn sheep release plan identified release sites within the WSA. Release of bighorn sheep within the WSA may require the implementation of three water development projects. If suitable terrain is found, each water development would utilize a natural slickrock apron. Should natural slickrock not be found, a 30' by 50' camouflaged corrugated tin apron would be placed on the ground. Two painted 1,600 gallon storage tanks would be associated with each of the three water development projects. The construction and yearly maintenance of the water developments would be done with non-motorized equipment.

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Rangeland Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the U. S. The 8,960 acres of crucial habitat in the WSA has been preliminarily categorized as Category I desert tortoise habitat (see Appendix A). Category I and II habitats require extremely intensive management practices in order to maintain viable populations of desert tortoise. Categorization replaces the existing crucial/noncrucial habitat classification.

#### **ALTERNATIVE A (Partial Wilderness Alternative)**

Under this alternative, 11,050 acres out of 21,296 acres of public land, would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation. The remaining 10,246 acres would be recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-15).

#### **Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions**

Subject to valid existing rights, the 11,050 acres of the Million Hills WSA recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. Exploration, development, or production of potential mineral resources is not projected to occur within the suitable portion of the WSA under Alternative A. If plans of operation are received for the four mining claims located in the suitable portion, validity exams would be conducted.

The 10,246 acres of the Million Hills WSA recommended as unsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open to all forms of appropriation under the mining laws. Exploration, development, or production of potential mineral resources is not projected to occur within the unsuitable portion of the WSA. As of 1987, no mining claims existed in the unsuitable portion of the WSA.

#### **Energy Resource Actions**

Exploration for and development of energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) in the suitable portion would not occur due to the withdrawal of the designated wilderness area from mineral leasing and entry. This area has a low favorability for the occurrence of energy resources (GEM 1983) and no oil and gas leases exist within this portion of the WSA.

The portion of the WSA recommended unsuitable indicates a low favorability for the occurrence of energy resource (GEM 1983). Presently, five oil and gas leases (covering approximately 2,800 acres) exist within this portion of the WSA.

Based on current energy exploration activity occurring outside the WSA, it is projected that two exploratory wells would be drilled within the northwestern portion of the unsuitable area. Surface disturbance from the two projected wells would total approximately 13.5 acres, involving 6 acres for well pads cleared of surface vegetation and topsoil and the construction of 2.5 miles of access road. Neither producing wells nor an oil

field are projected, nor is any further geophysical exploration within the WSA.

Mitigation designed to protect the desert tortoise and its habitat in the northern portion of the WSA will be required for any surface disturbing actions and will include the following measures at a minimum:

- 1) Prior to the approval of any drilling or plan of operations a site specific survey will be conducted to determine tortoise occurrence.
- 2) The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be consulted (Section 7).
- 3) In Category I areas no net loss of habitat will be allowed. This will require acquisition of or enhancement of existing habitat to replace habitat lost through disturbance.
- 4) Relocation of individual tortoises at risk to new locations. (Note to reader - Relocation of tortoise has not generally proved successful and is not generally favored by the Fish and Wildlife Service as a primary mitigating measure.)
- 5) Fencing of specific locations (drilling rigs, mud pits, equipment yards, etc.) to prevent tortoises from entering disturbed areas.
- 6) Designation of travel routes and closure areas to avoid motorized use in areas of crucial habitat.
- 7) Rehabilitation of disturbed sites to restore damaged habitat.

"No net loss of habitat" refers to tortoise habitat in all of southern Nevada. Therefore, habitat lost due to actions within WSAs, whether designated wilderness or not, may be mitigated within the WSA or on lands elsewhere in southern Nevada which provide tortoise habitat. Similarly, habitat within WSAs could be enhanced to offset habitat losses in other areas. Both cases will depend on site specific environmental analysis and mitigating measures developed in response to a specific activity proposal.

#### **Recreation Management Actions**

The 11,050 acre suitable portion of the Million Hills WSA would be closed to motorized recreational pursuits such as off-road vehicle sightseeing, vehicle camping, and vehicular access for hunting and trapping. This would eliminate about 75 visits per year within the recommended suitable area.

Non-motorized recreation would continue to increase from an estimated 35 to about 150 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting, trapping, sightseeing and hiking/nature study.

Motorized recreational use could continue within the 10,246 acre nonsuitable portion of the WSA. The area would be managed through an off-road vehicle management plan and designations (limited use) as specified in the Clark County Management Framework Plan (MFP). Motorized travel within the nonsuitable area would be limited to roads, ways and washes and competition would be limited to non-speed events. Motorized recreational uses are projected to increase from an estimated 75 to 120 visits annually.

Non-motorized recreational use would continue within the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA. Visitation within this portion of the WSA is projected to increase from an estimated 15 to 30 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting and trapping and rockhounding.

#### **Grazing Management Actions**

The Million Hills WSA lies within two grazing allotments, the Gold Butte Allotment (ephemeral) and the Azure Ridge Allotment (ephemeral). The Azure Ridge Allotment lies entirely within the recommended suitable area and is managed under an Allotment Management Plan (AMP) administered by the Arizona Strip District. The portion of the Gold Butte Allotment located within the recommended suitable area would utilize an estimated 103 AUMs for cattle and 101 AUMs for burros.

The portion of the Gold Butte Allotment located within the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA would utilize an estimated 88 AUMs for cattle and 87 AUMs for burros.

Yearly maintenance of the one fence line and one improved spring that exist within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA would be done with horses, on foot and occasional use of motorized equipment.



A portion (4 miles) of an eight mile fence is proposed for development along the eastern boundary. Construction and maintenance would be accomplished with non-motorized equipment. This development would be subject to the wilderness protection constraints set forth in the Wilderness Management Policy.

One fence line and one improved spring are located within the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA. A portion (4 miles) of an eight mile fence is proposed for development on the boundary of the area.

#### Wildlife Management Actions

The Million Hills WSA offers potential year long bighorn sheep habitat. A 1983 bighorn sheep release plan identified release sites within the WSA. Release of bighorn sheep within the WSA may require the implementation of three water development projects. If suitable terrain is found, each water development would utilize a natural slickrock apron. Should natural slickrock not be found, a 30' by 50' camouflaged corrugated tin apron would be placed on the ground. Two painted 1,600 gallon storage tanks would be associated with each of the three water development projects.

Two of the water developments would be located within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA. Construction and yearly maintenance would be done with non-motorized equipment. The third water development would be located within the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA.

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Rangeland Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the U. S. The 8,960 acres of crucial habitat in the WSA has been preliminarily categorized as Category I desert tortoise habitat (see Appendix A). Category I and II habitats require extremely intensive management practices in order to maintain viable populations of desert tortoise. Categorization replaces the existing crucial/noncrucial habitat classification.

Table 2-6

Comparative Summary of the Impacts by Alternative - Million Hills

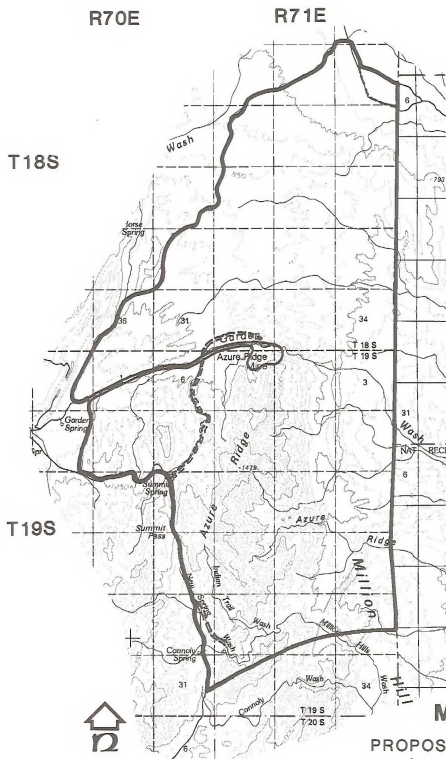
ISSUE TOPICS	PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)	ALL WILDERNESS	PARTIAL WILDERNESS
Impacts on Wilderness Values	The sights, sounds and surface disturbances created by increased cross country motorized recreational use, projected mineral and oil and gas exploration would contribute to the loss of wilderness values on 12,656 acres of the WSA. Wilderness values are expected to be retained within the remaining 8,640 acres of the WSA as no surface disturbing activities are anticipated.	Designation would preserve wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive recreation and the scenic features of Azure Ridge.	Wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation and the geologically scenic Azure Ridge, would be retained within the 11,050 acre area recommended suitable. There would be a loss of wilderness values on the 10,246 acres recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation as continued and increasing cross country motorized recreational use and the projected exploration of oil and gas would negatively impact the area.



Table 2-6 Continued

Comparative Summary of the Impacts by Alternative - Million Hills

ISSUE TOPICS	PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)	ALL WILDERNESS	PARTIAL WILDERNESS
Impacts on Exploration for and Development of Non-Energy Mineral Resources	Mineral resources within the WSA would be available for exploration and development. The exploration of existing mining claims is projected to occur within the WSA. There are no projected adverse impacts on the exploration for and development of mineral resources.	Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. Mineral exploration activity on existing claims would not occur due to the lack of significant mineralization to support validity examinations. Development of base metal resources is not projected to take place.	Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA. Mineral exploration activity projected to occur without wilderness designation would not occur due to the lack of valid claims if designation occurs. Development of base metal resources is not projected to take place within either the recommended suitable or nonsuitable areas.
Impacts on the Level of Exploration for Oil and Gas	Oil and gas resources within the WSA would be available for exploration. The drilling of two exploratory wells is projected to occur within the WSA. There are no projected adverse impacts on the exploration for oil and gas resources.	The exploratory drilling of two oil and gas wells projected for the WSA would be foregone.	Lands within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA would be unavailable for energy exploration. However, no oil and gas exploration is projected to occur within this portion of the WSA. The drilling of two exploratory wells is projected to occur within the recommended nonsuitable area. No adverse impact to oil and gas exploration is projected to occur. Production from the wells is not expected.
Impacts on Motorized Recreational Use	Motorized recreational use would continue and increase under the Proposed Action.	Motorized recreational use of 150 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.	Motorized recreational use would be eliminated on the 11,050 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation and approximately 75 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.
Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise	20 acres of Category I desert tortoise habitat would be lost to projected oil and gas exploration activity and increased cross country motorized vehicle use.	Designation of the WSA would eliminate the loss of 20 acres and enhance the protection of the 1,800 acres of Category I desert tortoise habitat.	20 acres of Category I desert tortoise habitat would be lost to projected oil and gas exploration activity and increased cross country motorized vehicle use.



**MAP 2-13**

**PROPOSED ACTION  
(No Wilderness)**

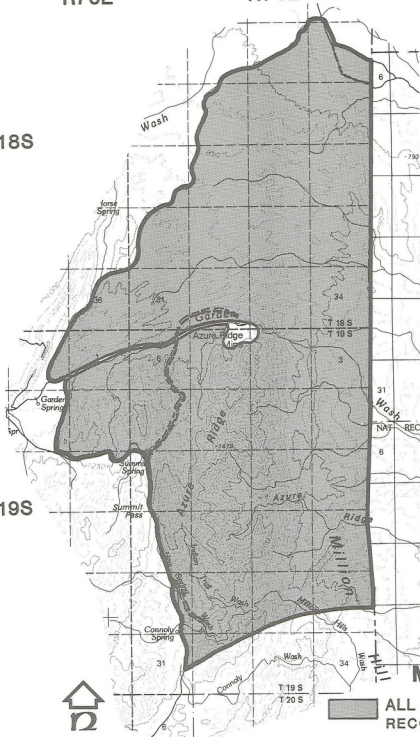
**MILLION HILLS  
NV-050-233  
WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVES**

R70E

R71E

T18S

T19S



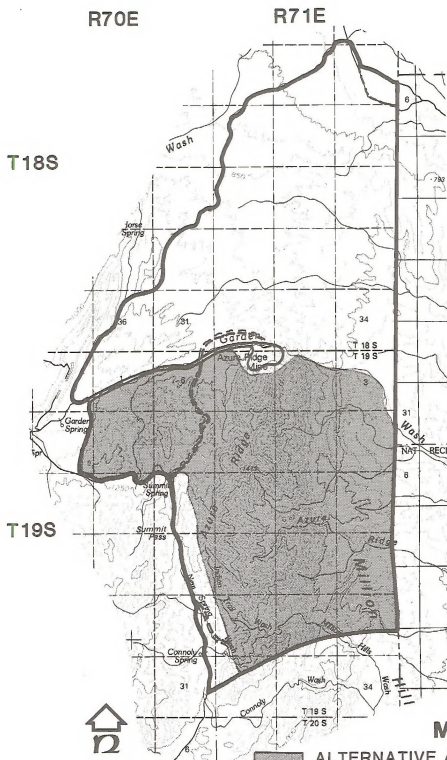
**MAP 2-14**

**ALL WILDERNESS  
RECOMMENDED SUITABLE**

**MILLION HILLS**

**NV-050-233**

**ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**



**MAP 2-15**

**ALTERNATIVE A (Partial)  
RECOMMENDED SUITABLE**

**MILLION HILLS**

**NV-050-233**

**ALTERNATIVE A PARTIAL  
WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

## **GARRETT BUTTES (NV-050-235)**

### **PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative)**

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 11,835 acre area as unsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-16).

#### **Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions**

The 11,835 acres of the Garrett Buttes WSA would remain open to all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. Exploration for or development of potential minerals is not projected to occur within the WSA due to lack of interest, absence of mining claims and prospecting activity, and poor marketable location. There is no known indication of mineralization within the WSA.

#### **Energy Resource Actions**

Neither exploration nor development of potential energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) is projected to occur as the rock strata of the WSA are not suitable reservoirs for hydrocarbon accumulation.

#### **Recreation Management Actions**

Motorized recreational use would continue within the WSA managed through an off-road vehicle management plan and designations (limited use) as specified in the Clark County Management Framework Plan (MFP). Motorized travel within the WSA would be limited to roads, ways and washes and competition would be limited to non-speed events. Motorized recreational uses are projected to increase from an estimated 180 to 255 visits annually.

Non-motorized recreational use would continue within the WSA. Visitation within the WSA is projected to increase from an estimated 50 to 65 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting, trapping and rockhounding.

#### **Grazing Management Actions**

The Garrett Buttes WSA lies within one grazing allotment, the Gold Butte Allotment (ephemeral). Approximately seven percent of the Gold Butte Allotment, which has one permittee, is located within the WSA. The portion of the Gold Butte Allotment located within the WSA would utilize an estimated 191 AUMs for cattle and 188 AUMs for burros.

Existing range improvements within the Garrett Buttes WSA consist of five developed seeps and springs. No other range improvements exist within the WSA's boundaries.

A one mile fence, to be located in the northeast corner of the WSA is the only proposed range improvement for the area.

#### **Wildlife Management Actions**

Excellent habitat for Gambel's quail exists within the WSA. Several bird water developments have been implemented within the area to promote populations of this game bird.

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Rangeland Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the U.S. (Appendix A). An initial categorization has been completed (8/89) which did not classify any of the Garrett Butte WSA as either Category I, II or III desert tortoise habitat. Since desert tortoise habitat does exist north and east of the WSA, future population studies may lead to formal categorization of this area.

### **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

The All Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 11,835 acre area as suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-17).

### **Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions**

Subject to valid existing rights, the 11,835 acres of the Garrett Buttes WSA recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. Validity examinations would be conducted on any mining claims located within the WSA at the time a plan of operation is submitted. As of 1987, no mining claims existed within the WSA.

The Garrett Buttes WSA is considered to have low favorability for the occurrence of metallic mineral resources. The WSA is considered to have low favorability for the occurrence of nonmetallic resources within 45 percent of the area and moderate favorability for the occurrence of nonmetallic mineral resources within 55 percent of the area (GEM 1983). (See Mineral Favorability Map). There is no known indication of mineralization within the WSA. Exploration for and development of potential locatable minerals are not projected to occur regardless of designation.

### **Energy Resource Actions**

The WSA is considered to have low favorability for the occurrence of energy resources (GEM 1983). Presently, no oil and gas leases exist within the WSA. (See Mineral Lease Map). Under the All Wilderness Alternative the WSA would be unavailable for energy leasing. Neither exploration nor development of energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) is projected to occur as the rock strata of the WSA are not suitable reservoirs for hydrocarbon accumulation.

### **Recreation Management Actions**

The WSA would be closed to cross country motorized recreational pursuits such as off-road vehicle driving, vehicle camping and vehicular access for hunting, trapping and rock collecting. This would eliminate about 180 visits per year within the WSA. No recreation facilities or developments exist within or are proposed for the WSA.

Non-motorized recreation is projected to increase from 50 to 110 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting, trapping, rockhounding and nature study.

### **Grazing Management Actions**

The Garrett Buttes WSA lies within one grazing allotment; the Gold Butte Allotment (ephemeral). Approximately seven percent of the Gold Butte Allotment, which has one permittee, is located within the WSA. The portion of the Gold Butte Allotment located within the WSA would utilize an estimated 191 AUMs for cattle and 188 AUMs for burros.

Existing range improvements within the Garrett Buttes-WSA consist of five developed seeps and springs. Yearly maintenance of these improved springs would require occasional use of vehicles along established ways. No other range improvements exist within the WSA's boundaries.

A one mile fence, to be located in the northeast corner of the WSA, is the only proposed range improvement for the area. Construction and yearly maintenance of the fence would be done with non-motorized equipment. This range improvement would be subject to the wilderness protection constraints set forth in the Wilderness Management Policy.

### **Wildlife Management Actions**

Excellent habitat for Gambel's quail exists within the WSA. Several bird water developments have been implemented within the area to promote populations of this game bird. Maintenance of the water developments would be done with non-motorized equipment.

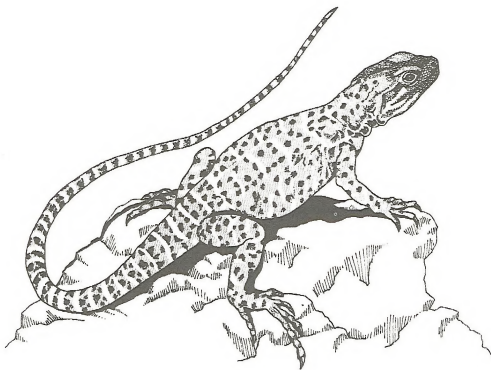
Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Rangeland Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the U.S. (Appendix A). An initial categorization has been completed (8/89) which did not classify any of the Garrett Butte WSA as either Category I, II or III desert tortoise habitat. Since desert tortoise habitat does exist north and east of the WSA, future population studies may lead to formal categorization of this area.



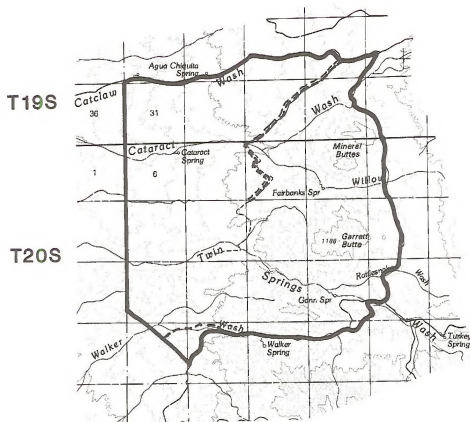
Table 2-7

## Comparative Summary of the Impacts by Alternative - Garrett Buttes

IMPACT TOPIC	PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)	ALL WILDERNESS
Impacts on Wilderness Values	Wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude and special features would be diminished and, in some instances, lost due to the sights, sounds and surface disturbances created by continued and the projected increase in motorized recreational use within the WSA. Special features would be afforded some protection through mitigative measures and the implementation of future management actions.	Designating the WSA as wilderness would preserve wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities that exist for solitude, and would enhance the protection of desert tortoise.
Impacts on Motorized Recreational Use	Motorized recreational use would benefit under the Proposed Action. No adverse impacts to this use is expected to occur.	Motorized recreational use of 180 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.
Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise	Dispersed motorized recreational use has the potential for impacting desert tortoise and their habitat.	Impacts on desert tortoise due to motorized vehicle use would be eliminated.



R69E

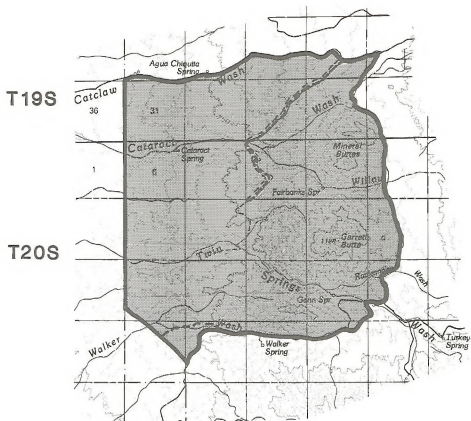


PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)

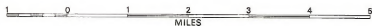


**MAP 2-16**  
**WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVES**  
**GARRETT BUTTES**  
**NV-050-235**

R69E



ALL WILDERNESS  
RECOMMENDED SUITABLE



**MAP 2-17**

**ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE  
GARRETT BUTTES  
NV-050-235**

## **QUAIL SPRINGS WSA (NV-050-411)**

### **PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative)**

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 12,145 acre area as nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-18).

### **Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions**

The 12,145 acres of the Quail Springs WSA recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open to all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. Exploration for or development of potential minerals is not projected to occur within the WSA due to lack of interest and prospecting activity, no known metallic minerals exist within the WSA and the geologic conditions are not favorable for the accumulation of these minerals.

### **Energy Resource Actions**

Exploration for and development of potential energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) are not projected to occur as the WSA shows low accumulation for hydrocarbons; exploratory wells drilled outside the WSA have been unsuccessful.

### **Recreation Management Actions**

Motorized recreational use would continue within the WSA managed through an off-road vehicle management plan and designations (limited use) as specified in the Clark County Management Framework Plan (MFP). The ORV designation restricts high speed competitive events within the WSA. Motorized recreational uses are projected to increase from an estimated 150 to 190 visits annually.

Non-motorized recreation use is currently estimated at 30 visits annually. It is projected that this use would increase to an estimated 40 visits annually under the Proposed Action. Primary uses would be hunting and horseback riding.

### **Grazing Management Actions**

The Quail Springs WSA lies within one grazing allotment, the Indian Springs Allotment (not-permitted). Approximately 40 percent of the Indian Springs Allotment is within the WSA. The entire Indian Springs Allotment has been withdrawn from grazing during the past five years and an application for ephemeral use is not projected. There are no existing or proposed range improvements in the WSA.

### **Wildlife Management Actions**

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Rangeland Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the U.S. (Appendix A). The entire WSA (12,145 acres) has been preliminarily categorized as Category II desert tortoise habitat. The Category II management goal is to maintain stable viable populations and halt further declines in tortoise habitat values. Categorization replaces the existing crucial/noncrucial habitat classification.

### **Realty Management Actions**

A utility corridor, extending the 6 mile width of the WSA, has been identified by potential users, including the Western Utility Group ("Western Regional Corridor Study" - 1986). The construction of five 500 kv transmission lines, two gas and two fiber optic lines and three access roads is projected. Construction of these projected utilities would physically disturb an estimated 200 acres within the WSA.

A transportation corridor, extending the 6 mile width of the WSA, has been identified by the Department of Energy. It is projected that a rail line and access road could be built within this one mile wide transportation corridor. Construction of a rail line would physically disturb an estimated 65 acres.

Mitigation designed to protect the desert tortoise and its habitat will be required for any surface disturbing actions and will include the following measures at a minimum:

- 1) Prior to the approval of any plan of operations a site specific survey will be conducted to determine tortoise occurrence.
- 2) In Category I and II areas no net loss of habitat will be allowed. This will require acquisition of new or enhancement of existing habitat to replace habitat lost through disturbance.
- 3) The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be consulted (Section 7).
- 4) Relocation of individual tortoises at risk to new locations. (Note to reader - Relocation of tortoise has not generally proved successful and is not generally favored by the Fish and Wildlife Service as a primary mitigating measure.)
- 5) Fencing of specific locations (storage sites, borrow pits, etc.) to prevent tortoises from entering disturbed areas.
- 6) Designation of travel routes and closure areas.
- 7) Rehabilitation of disturbed sites to restore damaged habitat.

"No net loss of habitat" refers to tortoise habitat in all of southern Nevada. Therefore, habitat lost due to actions within WSAs, whether designated wilderness or not, may be mitigated within the WSA or on lands elsewhere in southern Nevada which provide tortoise habitat. Similarly, habitat within WSAs could be enhanced to offset habitat losses in other areas. Both cases will depend on site specific environmental analysis and mitigating measures developed in response to a specific activity proposal.

#### **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

All 12,145 acres of public land in the Quail Springs WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-19).

#### **Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions**

Subject to valid existing rights, the 12,145 acres of the Quail Springs WSA recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. If plans of operation are received for the thirteen existing claims in the WSA, validity exams would be conducted. Exploration and development of the existing claims is not projected to occur because geologic conditions are not favorable for the accumulation of non-energy minerals.

#### **Energy Resource Actions**

Exploration for and development of energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) would not occur due to withdrawal of the designated wilderness area from mineral leasing and entry. The WSA has a low potential for hydrocarbons and exploratory wells drilled outside the area have proved unsuccessful.

#### **Recreation Management Actions**

The WSA would be closed to cross country motorized recreational pursuits such as off-road vehicle driving and vehicular access for target shooting and hunting. This would eliminate about 150 visits per year within the WSA.

Non-motorized recreation is projected to increase from 30 to 60 visits annually. Primary uses would be target shooting, hunting and horseback riding.

#### **Grazing Management Actions**

The Quail Springs WSA lies within one grazing allotment, the Indian Springs Allotment (not-permitted). Approximately 40 percent of the Indian Springs Allotment is within the WSA. The entire Indian Springs Allotment has been withdrawn from grazing during the past five years and an application for ephemeral use is not projected. There are no existing or proposed range improvements in the WSA.

#### **Wildlife Management Actions**

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Rangewide Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the U.S. (Appendix A). The entire WSA (12,145 acres) has been preliminarily categorized as Category II desert tortoise habitat. The Category II management goal is to maintain stable viable populations and halt further declines in tortoise habitat values. Categorization replaces the existing crucial/noncrucial habitat

classification.

### Realty Management Actions

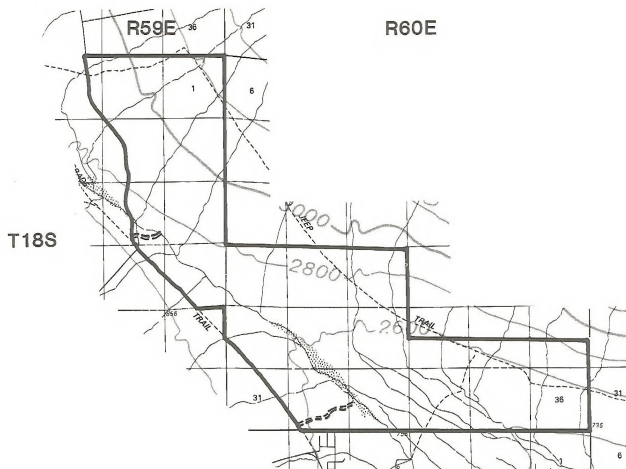
The projected development of utilities and a rail line would not occur due to wilderness designation.

Table 2-8

Comparative Summary of the Impacts by Alternative - Quail Springs

IMPACT TOPIC	PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)	ALL WILDERNESS
Impacts on Wilderness Values	Wilderness values within the WSA would be negatively impacted under the Proposed Action. The projected development of utilities, rail lines, associated access routes, and increased cross country vehicle use would physically disturb an estimated 285 acres within the WSA. The natural perception of the entire WSA would be impaired by the construction of utilities (towers, lines, roads) and rail lines across the landscape. The outstanding opportunities for solitude would be lost due to the sights and sounds created by the aforementioned activities occurring in the WSA. Special features would be afforded some protection through mitigative measures and the implementation of future management actions.	Designating the WSA as wilderness would preserve wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities that exist for solitude, and would enhance the protection of desert tortoise.
Impacts on Motorized Recreational Use	Motorized recreational use would benefit under the Proposed Action. No adverse impacts to this use is expected to occur.	Motorized recreational use of 150 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.
Impacts on Development of Utilities	The development of utilities could occur as a result of the entire WSA being recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation. No adverse impacts to these uses are expected to occur.	Under the All Wilderness Alternative, utilities could not be developed within the WSA.
Impacts on Development of a Rail Line	The development of a projected rail line could occur as a result of the entire WSA being recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation. No adverse impacts to these uses are expected to occur.	Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the WSA would be unavailable for the development of a rail line.
Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise	At least 265 acres of Category II desert tortoise habitat will be lost due to utility and railroad line construction.	The loss of 265 acres of desert tortoise habitat would not occur.

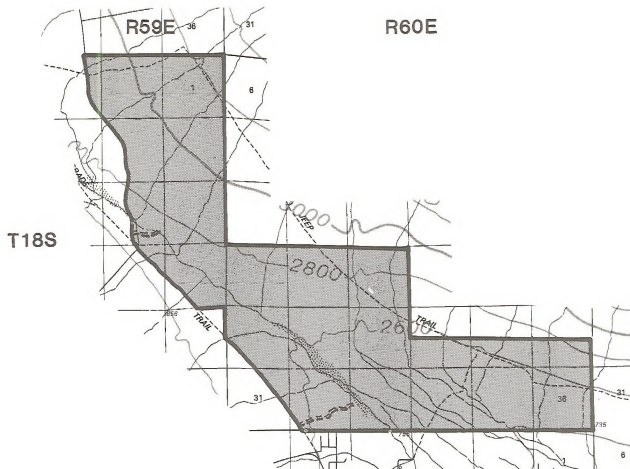




PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)



**MAP 2-18**  
**WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVES**  
**QUAIL SPRINGS**  
**NV-050-411**




**ALL WILDERNESS  
RECOMMENDED SUITABLE**



**MAP 2-19**  
**ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**  
**QUAIL SPRINGS**  
**NV-050-411**

## **EL DORADO WSA (NV-050-423)**

### **PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative)**

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 12,290 acre area as nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-20).

### **Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions**

The 12,290 acres of the El Dorado WSA recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open to all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws.

It is projected that exploration would eventually occur within the WSA to define the extent of the adjacent Eldorado Mining District, where significant amounts of gold, silver, and copper were produced during the 20's and 30's. A total of 9.2 acres of surface disturbance in the northwest portion of the WSA associated with 3 miles of road construction, two pilot plants, drill pad construction and the trenching of an estimated 217 test pits is projected to occur as a result of the exploration program.

Exploration of existing mining claims within the southeast portion of the WSA is projected. A total of 11.7 acres of surface disturbance associated with 3 miles of road construction, two pilot plants, drill pad construction and the trenching of an estimated 290 test pits is projected to occur as a result of the exploration program.

Development or production is not projected to occur within either portion of the WSA as a result of exploration.

### **Energy Resource Actions**

Exploration for or development of energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) is not projected to occur as the rock structure of the WSA is not suitable for the accumulation of hydrocarbons.

### **Recreation Management Actions**

Under the Proposed Action, motorized recreational use would continue within the WSA managed through an off-road vehicle management plan and designations (limited use) as specified in the Clark County Management Framework Plan (MFP). The ORV designation would limit the number, type and location of competitive events within the WSA. Motorized recreational uses are projected to increase from an estimated 550 to 720 visits annually.

Non-motorized recreation use is currently estimated at 70 visits annually. It is projected that this use would increase to an estimated 110 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting, hiking/nature study and horseback riding.

Recreational developments, including interpretative signs and an access trail could be constructed within the WSA as part of an interpretative program for Gregory's Arch.

### **Grazing Management Actions**

The El Dorado WSA lies within one grazing allotment, the Ireteba Peaks Allotment (ephemeral). Approximately three percent of the Ireteba Peaks Allotment is located within the WSA. The portion of the Ireteba Peaks Allotment located within the WSA would utilize an estimated 55 AUMs for cattle, 25 AUMs for burros and 9 AUMs for bighorn sheep.

Existing range improvements within the WSA consist of one improved spring. No new range improvements are proposed for development within the WSA.

### **Wildlife Management Actions**

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Rangeland Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the

U.S. (Appendix A). The 2,700 acres of noncrucial desert tortoise habitat in the extreme western portion of the WSA has been preliminarily categorized as Category III desert tortoise habitat. The Category III management goal is to limit tortoise habitat and population declines to the extent possible by mitigating impacts. Categorization replaces the existing crucial/noncrucial habitat classification.

#### **Realty Management Actions**

A utility corridor, extending the 2 mile width of the WSA, has been identified by potential users, including the Western Utility Group ("Western Regional Corridor Study" - 1986). The construction of five 500 kv transmission lines, one gas and one fiber optic lines and two access roads is projected. Construction of these projected utilities would physically disturb an estimated 85 acres within the WSA.

Located within the WSA's boundaries is one undeveloped patented mining claim totaling 120 acres. It is projected that the private land owners would exercise their rights of access to their patented claim. A right-of-way would be issued for access to the private land. Approximately .25 mile of access route, disturbing about one half of an acre, would be constructed within the WSA.

#### **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

All 12,290 acres of public land in the El Dorado WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-21).

#### **Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions**

Subject to valid existing rights, the 12,290 acres of the El Dorado WSA recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. If plans of operation are received for the twenty-four existing claims in the WSA, validity exams would be conducted. Exploration, development, or production of potential mineral resources is not projected to occur under the All Wilderness Alternative.

#### **Energy Resource Actions**

Neither exploration nor development of potential energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) is projected to occur as the rock structure of the WSA is not suitable for the accumulation of hydrocarbons.

#### **Recreation Management Actions**

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the WSA would be closed to cross country motorized recreational pursuits such as off-road vehicle driving, organized ORV competitive events, vehicle camping, and vehicular access for hunting and trapping. This would eliminate about 550 visits per year within the WSA.

Non-motorized recreation is projected to increase from 70 to 220 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting, hiking and photography/nature study.

The placement of interpretative signs proposed for the Gregory's Arch Interpretative program would not take place within the WSA. A proposed hiking trail, less than one mile in length, into Gregory's Arch could be developed.

#### **Grazing Management Actions**

The El Dorado WSA lies within one grazing allotment, the Ireteba Peaks Allotment (ephemeral). Approximately three percent of the Ireteba Peaks Allotment is located within the WSA. The portion of the Ireteba Peaks Allotment located within the WSA would utilize an estimated 55 AUMs for cattle, 25 AUMs for burros and 9 AUMs for bighorn sheep.

Existing range improvements within the WSA consist of one improved spring. Yearly maintenance of the spring would be accomplished without the use of motorized equipment. No new range improvements are proposed for development within the WSA.

#### **Wildlife Management Actions**

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Rangelwide Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the

U.S. (Appendix A). The 2,700 acres of noncrucial desert tortoise habitat in the extreme western portion of the WSA has been preliminarily categorized as Category III desert tortoise habitat. The Category III management goal is to limit tortoise habitat and population declines to the extent possible by mitigating impacts. Categorization replaces the existing crucial/noncrucial habitat classification.

#### **Realty Management Actions**

The projected development of utilities and the establishment of a utility corridor would not occur due to wilderness designation.

Located within the WSA's boundaries is one patented mining claim totaling 120 acres. It is projected that the private land owners would exercise their rights of access to their patented claim. A rights-of-way would be issued for access to the private land. Approximately .25 mile of access route, disturbing about one half of an acre, would be constructed within the WSA.

#### **ALTERNATIVE A (Partial Wilderness Alternative)**

Under this alternative, 9,570 acres out of 12,290 acres of public land, would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation. The remaining 2,720 acres of public land would be recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-22).

#### **Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions**

Subject to valid existing rights, the 9,570 acres of the El Dorado WSA recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. If plans of operation are received for the thirteen existing claims in the WSA, validity exams would be conducted. Exploration, development, or production of potential mineral resources is not projected to occur due to low favorability for the occurrence of metallic and non-metallic minerals and moderate favorability for the occurrence of uranium.

The 2,720 acres of the El Dorado WSA recommended as unsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open to all forms of appropriation under the mining laws.

The WSA is located adjacent to the Eldorado Mining District, where significant amounts of gold, silver, and copper were produced during the 20's and 30's. It is projected that exploration would eventually occur within the recommended unsuitable portion of the WSA to define the extent of the mining district's mineralization.

Exploration efforts within the northwest portion of the recommended unsuitable area is projected. A total of 9.2 acres of surface disturbance primarily associated with 3 miles of road construction and two pilot plants, drill pad construction and the trenching of an estimated 217 test pits is projected to occur as a result of the exploration program.

Exploration of existing mining claims for precious metals within the southeast portion of the unsuitable area is projected. A total of 2.2 acres of surface disturbance primarily associated with .5 mile of road construction, drill pad construction and the trenching of an estimated 65 test pits is projected to occur as a result of the exploration program.

Development or production is not projected to occur within either portion of the unsuitable area as a result of exploration.

#### **Energy Resource Actions**

Neither exploration nor development of potential energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) is projected to occur as the rock structure of the WSA is not suitable for the accumulation of hydrocarbons and the designation of 9,570 acres as wilderness.

### **Recreation Management Actions**

The 9,570 acre suitable portion of the El Dorado WSA would be closed to cross country motorized recreational pursuits such as off-road vehicle sightseeing, vehicle camping, organized ORV events and vehicular access for hunting and trapping. This would eliminate about 280 visits per year within the suitable area.

Non-motorized recreation is projected to increase from 55 to 190 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting, hiking and photography/nature study.

The placement of Interpretative signs proposed for the Gregory's Arch interpretative program would not take place within the suitable portion of the WSA. A proposed hiking trail, less than one mile in length, into Gregory's Arch would be developed.

The entire unsuitable portion of the WSA, including 3.5 miles of projected road associated with mineral exploration, could remain open to motorized vehicles. Motorized recreational use, including off-road driving, vehicular access for hunting and organized ORV events, could take place within the WSA as directed by the off-road vehicle designation (limited use) specified in the Clark County Management Framework Plan (MFP). The ORV designation would limit and place restrictions on competitive events within the WSA. Motorized recreational uses are projected to increase from an estimated 270 to 520 visits annually.

Non-motorized recreation use is currently estimated at 15 visits annually within the recommended unsuitable portion of the WSA. It is projected that this use would increase to an estimated 25 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting, hiking/nature study.

### **Grazing Management Actions**

The El Dorado WSA lies within one grazing allotment, the Ireteba Peaks Allotment (ephemeral). Approximately three percent of the Ireteba Peaks Allotment is located within the WSA. The portion of the Ireteba Peaks Allotment located within the WSA would utilize an estimated 55 AUMs for cattle, 25 AUMs for burros and 9 AUMs for bighorn sheep.

Existing range improvements within the WSA consist of one improved spring. Yearly maintenance of the spring would be accomplished without the use of motorized equipment. No new range improvements are proposed for development within the WSA.

### **Wildlife Management Actions**

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Rangeland Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the U.S. (Appendix A). The 2,700 acres of noncrucial desert tortoise habitat in the extreme western portion of the WSA has been preliminarily categorized as Category III desert tortoise habitat. The Category III management goal is to limit tortoise habitat and population declines to the extent possible by mitigating impacts. Categorization replaces the existing crucial/noncrucial habitat classification.

### **Realty Management Actions**

The projected development of utilities and the establishment of a utility corridor would not occur due to blockage of the proposed corridor by wilderness designation of a portion of the WSA.

Located within the recommended suitable area's boundary is one undeveloped patented mining claim totaling 120 acres. It is projected that the private land owners would exercise their rights of access to their patented claim. A right-of-way would be issued for access to the private land. Approximately .25 mile of access route, disturbing about one half of an acre, would be constructed within the WSA.



Table 2-9

## Comparative Summary of the Impacts by Alternative - El Dorado

ISSUE TOPICS	PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)	ALL WILDERNESS	PARTIAL WILDERNESS
Impacts on Wilderness Values	Wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation that exist within 6,600 acres of the WSA would be diminished and, in some instances, lost. The sights, sounds and surface disturbances created by increased motorized recreational use, projected mineral exploration and utility construction and maintenance would adversely impact wilderness values. The desert tortoise would be afforded some protection through mitigative measures and the implementation of future management actions. Wilderness values would be retained within the remaining 5,690 acres of the WSA.	Designation would preserve wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude, and primitive recreation and the identified special features that exist within 12,257 of the WSA's 12,290 acres.	Wilderness values, the two varieties of penstemon and the special geological value of Gregory's Arch would be retained within an estimated 8,970 of the 9,570 acres of the recommended suitable area. Wilderness values on the remaining 600 acres of the suitable portion would be diminished and, in some instances lost, as a result of unauthorized off-road motorized vehicle use, mineral exploration and utility line construction and maintenance projected to occur on adjacent public lands. Wilderness values would be lost on the 2,720 acres recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation as continued and increased cross country motorized vehicle use, mineral exploration and construction of utilities would adversely impact the area. The desert tortoise would be afforded some protection through mitigative measures and the implementation of future management actions.
Impacts on Exploration for and Development of Non- Energy Mineral Resources	Mineral resources within the WSA would be available for exploration and development. The exploration of existing mining claims is projected to occur within the WSA. There are no projected adverse impacts on the exploration for and development of mineral resources.	Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. Mineral exploration activity projected to occur without wilderness designation would not take place due to the lack of valid claims if designation occurs. Development of precious metal resources is not projected to take place.	Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on unclaimed lands within the suitable portion. Exploration of existing mining claims is projected within the unsuitable portion. There are no projected adverse impacts on the exploration of mineral resources within this area. Development of precious metal resources is not projected to take place within either the recommended suitable or unsuitable areas.

Table 2-9 Continued

## Comparative Summary of the Impacts by Alternative - El Dorado

ISSUE TOPICS	PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)	ALL WILDERNESS	PARTIAL WILDERNESS
Impacts on Motorized Recreational Use	Motorized recreational use would benefit under the Proposed Action. No adverse impacts to this use is expected to occur.	Motorized recreational use of 550 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. Less desirable race routes would be utilized on adjacent public lands for competitive motorcycle events. The adverse impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be marginal.	Motorized recreational use would be eliminated on the 11,050 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation and approximately 75 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.
Impacts on Recreation Management	The development of an interpretive recreational program would benefit as a result of the entire WSA being recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation. No adverse impacts to this use are expected to occur.	The proposed interpretative program could not be fully implemented under the All Wilderness Alternative as interpretative signing would be precluded. Designation of the WSA as wilderness would not adversely affect this program.	Motorized recreational use would be eliminated on the 11,050 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation and approximately 75 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.
Impacts on Development of Utilities	The development of utilities could occur as a result of the entire WSA being recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation. No adverse impacts to these uses are expected to occur.	Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the WSA would be unavailable for the development of utilities. Less desirable routes would be utilized by potential utility users.	Under Alternative A the recommended suitable portion of the WSA would be unavailable for the development of utilities. Less desirable routes would be utilized by potential utility users.
Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise	Impacts from dispersed motorized vehicle use are possible.	Added protection of desert tortoise habitat due to elimination on motorized vehicle use.	Impacts from dispersed motorized vehicle use are possible.

R64E

T25S

T26S



PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness)

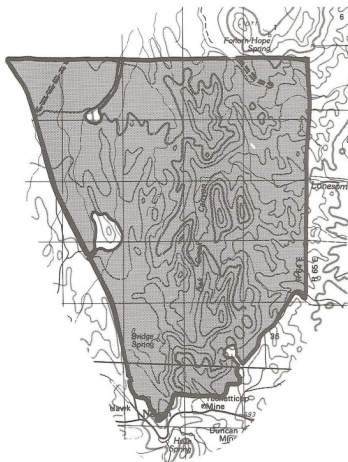


**MAP 2-20**  
**WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVES**  
**EL DORADO**  
**NV-050-423**

R64E

T25S

T26S



ALL WILDERNESS  
RECOMMENDED SUITABLE



**MAP 2-21**

**ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE  
EL DORADO  
NV-050-423**

R64E

T25S

T26S



ALTERNATIVE A (PARTIAL)  
RECOMMENDED SUITABLE



**MAP 2-22**  
**EL DORADO**  
**NV-050-423**  
**ALTERNATIVE A PARTIAL**  
**WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

## **IRETEBA PEAKS (NV-050-438)**

### **PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative)**

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 14,994 acre area as nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-23).

### **Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions**

The 14,994 acres of the Ireteba Peaks WSA recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open to all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws.

The northern portion of the WSA is located adjacent to the Eldorado Mining District and the southern half of the WSA abuts against the Searchlight Mining District. Both mining districts produced significant amounts of gold, silver, and copper the first half of this century. It is projected that exploration would eventually occur within the northern and southern portions of the WSA to define the extent of the mining districts mineralization.

Exploration for precious metals within the northern portion of the WSA is projected to involve 19.7 acres of surface disturbance associated with 3 miles of road construction and two pilot plants, drill pad construction and the trenching of an estimated 290 test pits. Exploration within the southeast portion of the WSA is projected to involve 26.2 acres of surface disturbance associated with 3 miles of road construction and three pilot plants, drill pad construction and the trenching of an estimated 350 test pits.

Stipulations would be placed on mineral exploration activities within the southeast portion of the WSA in order to mitigate potential impacts to the desert tortoise. Such mitigative stipulations could require the removal of tortoise prior to any surface disturbance and the relocation of access routes away from the habitat area.

Development or production is not projected to occur within either portion of the WSA as a result of exploration.

### **Energy Resource Actions**

The Ireteba Peaks WSA is considered to have low favorability for the occurrence of oil, gas and geothermal resources (GEM 1983). (See Mineral Favorability Map.) Presently, no oil and gas leases exist within the WSA. Exploration for or development of potential energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) is not projected to occur as the rock structure of the WSA is not suitable for the accumulation of hydrocarbons.

### **Recreation Management Actions**

Under the Proposed Action, motorized recreational use could continue within the WSA. The area would be managed through an off-road vehicle management plan and designations (limited use) as specified in the Clark County Management Framework Plan (MFP). The ORV designation would limit the number, type and location of competitive events within the WSA. Motorized recreational uses are projected to increase from an estimated 65 to 130 visits annually.

Non-motorized recreation use is currently estimated at 50 visits annually. It is projected that this use would increase to an estimated 80 visits annually under the Proposed Action. Primary uses would be hunting and hiking/nature study.

### **Grazing Management Actions**

The Ireteba Peaks WSA lies within one grazing allotment, the Ireteba Peaks Allotment (ephemeral). Approximately four percent of the Ireteba Peaks Allotment is located within the WSA. The portion of the Ireteba Peaks Allotment located within WSA would utilize an estimated 74 AUMs for cattle, 33 AUMs for burros and 13 AUMs for bighorn sheep.

No range improvements or facilities exist within the WSA. Two springs are proposed for development within



the northeast portion of the WSA. Construction and maintenance of the springs would be accomplished without the use of motorized equipment. These improvements would be subject to the wilderness protection constraints set forth under the **Wilderness Management Policy**.

#### **Wildlife Management Actions**

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Rangelwide Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the U.S. (Appendix A). The extreme southern tip (1,800 acres) of the WSA has been preliminarily categorized as Category II desert tortoise habitat. The Category II management goal is to maintain stable, viable populations and halt further declines in tortoise habitat. Categorization replaces the existing crucial/noncrucial habitat classification.

#### **Realty Management Actions**

Under the Proposed Action utilities within the WSA could be developed. A possible route for a designated utility corridor, extending the 3 mile width of the northern tip of the WSA, has been identified by a potential user (Southern California Edison Co.). It is projected that one 500 kv transmission line and one access road could be built within a one mile wide utility corridor. General mitigation could require the removal of some topsoil. Construction of these projected utilities would physically disturb an estimated 25 acres within the WSA.

#### **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

All 14,994 acres of public land in the Ireteba Peaks WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-24).

#### **Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions**

Subject to valid and existing rights, the 14,994 acres of the Ireteba Peaks WSA recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. Validity examinations would be conducted on any mining claims located within the WSA at the time a plan of operations is submitted. As of 1987, a total of 19 mining claims covering approximately 380 acres existed within the WSA. (See Mining Claims Map).

Approximately six percent (900 acres) of the WSA is considered to have moderate favorability for the occurrence of metallic minerals and the remaining portion is considered to have low favorability. The entire WSA is considered to have low favorability for the occurrence of non-metallic minerals and moderate favorability for the occurrence of uranium (GEM 1983). (See Mineral Favorability Map). Exploration, development, or production of potential mineral resources is not projected to occur under the All Wilderness Alternative.

#### **Energy Resource Actions**

The Ireteba Peaks WSA is considered to have low favorability for the occurrence of oil, gas and geothermal resources (GEM 1983). Presently, no oil and gas leases exist within the WSA. The WSA would be unavailable for energy leasing under the All Wilderness Alternative. Neither exploration nor development of potential energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) is projected to occur as the rock structure of the WSA is not suitable for the accumulation of hydrocarbons.

#### **Recreation Management Actions**

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the WSA would be closed to cross country motorized recreational pursuits such as off-road vehicle sightseeing, vehicle camping, and vehicular access for hunting and trapping. This would eliminate about 65 visits per year within the suitable area. Vehicular use would continue along the boundary roads.

Non-motorized recreation is projected to increase from 50 to 150 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting, hiking and photography/nature study.

### **Grazing Management Actions**

The Ireteba Peaks WSA lies within one grazing allotment, the Ireteba Peaks Allotment (ephemeral). Approximately four percent of the Ireteba Peaks Allotment is located within the WSA. The portion of the Ireteba Peaks Allotment located within the WSA would utilize an estimated 74 AUMs for cattle, 33 AUMs for burros and 13 AUMs for bighorn sheep.

No range improvements or facilities exist within the WSA. Two springs are proposed for development within the northeast portion of the WSA. Construction and maintenance of the springs would be accomplished without the use of motorized equipment. These improvements would be subject to the wilderness protection constraints set forth in the **Wilderness Management Policy**.

### **Wildlife Management Actions**

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Rangewide Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the U.S. (Appendix A). The extreme southern tip (1,800 acres) of the WSA has been preliminarily categorized as Category II desert tortoise habitat. The Category II management goal is to maintain stable, viable populations and halt further declines in tortoise habitat. Categorization replaces the existing crucial/noncrucial habitat classification.

### **Realty Management Actions**

Development of utilities would not occur within the area due to wilderness designation.

### **ALTERNATIVE A (Partial Wilderness Alternative)**

Under this alternative, 10,155 acres out of 14,994 acres of public land, would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation. The remaining 4,839 acres of public land would be recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-25).

### **Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions**

Subject to valid existing rights, the 10,155 acres of the Ireteba Peaks WSA recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. If plans of operation are received for the nine existing claims in this area, validity exams would be conducted. Exploration, development, or production of potential mineral resources is not projected to occur under Alternative A.

The 4,839 acres of the Ireteba Peaks WSA recommended as unsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open to all forms of appropriation under the mining laws. As of 1987, 10 claims covering approximately 200 acres existed within the unsuitable portion of the WSA.

The northern portion of the unsuitable area is located adjacent to the Eldorado Mining District and the southern portion of the unsuitable area abuts against the Searchlight Mining District. Both mining districts produced significant amounts of gold, silver, and copper the first half of this century. It is projected that exploration would eventually occur within the northern and southern portions of the unsuitable area to define the extent of the mining districts mineralization.

Within the northern portion of the unsuitable area, a total of 18.1 acres of surface disturbance primarily associated with 2.5 miles of road construction and two pilot plants, drill pad construction and the trenching of an estimated 240 test pits is projected. Within the southeast portion of the unsuitable area, 26.2 acres of surface disturbance primarily associated with 3 miles of road construction and three pilot plants, drill pad construction and the trenching of an estimated 350 test pits is projected.

Stipulations would be placed on mineral exploration activities within the southeast portion of the WSA in order to mitigate potential impacts to the desert tortoise. Such mitigative stipulations could require the removal of tortoise prior to any surface disturbance and the relocation of access routes away from the habitat area.

Development or production is not projected to occur within either portion of the WSA as a result of exploration.

#### **Energy Resource Actions**

The recommended suitable portion of the WSA would be unavailable for energy leasing under Alternative A. Exploration for or development of potential energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) is not projected to occur as the rock structure of the WSA is not suitable for the accumulation of hydrocarbons.

#### **Recreation Management Actions**

The 10,155 acre suitable portion of the Ireteba Peaks WSA would be closed to motorized recreational pursuits such as off-road vehicle sightseeing, vehicle camping, and vehicular access for hunting and trapping access. This would eliminate about 15 visits per year within the suitable area.

Non-motorized recreation is projected to increase from 30 to 100 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting, hiking and photography/nature study.

Motorized recreational use could continue within the 4,839 acre nonsuitable portion of the WSA. The area would be managed through an off-road vehicle management plan and designations (limited use) as specified in the Clark County Management Framework Plan (MFP). The ORV designation would limit the number, type and location of competitive events within the WSA. Motorized recreational uses are projected to increase from an estimated 50 to 115 visits annually.

Non-motorized recreation use is currently estimated at 20 visits annually within the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA. It is projected that this use would increase to an estimated 40 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting, hiking/nature study.

#### **Grazing Management Actions**

The Ireteba Peaks WSA lies within one grazing allotment, the Ireteba Peaks Allotment (ephemeral). Approximately four percent of the Ireteba Peaks Allotment is located within the WSA. The portion of the Ireteba Peaks Allotment located within the recommended suitable area would utilize an estimated 1,257 AUMs for cattle, 567 AUMs for burros and 215 AUMs for bighorn sheep.

The portion of the Ireteba Peaks Allotment located within the recommended nonsuitable area of the WSA would utilize an estimated 592 AUMs for cattle, 267 AUMs for burros and 102 AUMs for bighorn sheep.

No range improvements or facilities exist within the WSA. Two springs are proposed for development within the northeast portion of the recommended suitable portion of the WSA. Construction and maintenance of the springs would be accomplished without the use of motorized equipment. These improvements would be subject to the wilderness protection constraints set forth in the Wilderness Management Policy.

#### **Wildlife Management Actions**

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Range-wide Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the U.S. (Appendix A). The extreme southern tip (1,800 acres) of the WSA has been preliminarily categorized as Category II desert tortoise habitat. The Category II management goal is to maintain stable, viable populations and halt further declines in tortoise habitat. Categorization replaces the existing crucial/noncrucial habitat classification.

#### **Realty Management Actions**

Under Alternative A, utilities within the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA could be developed. A possible route for a designated utility corridor, extending the 3 mile width of the northern tip of the nonsuitable area, has been identified by a potential user (Southern California Edison Co.). It is projected that one 500 kv transmission line and one access road could be built within a one mile wide utility corridor. General mitigation could require the removal of some topsoil. Construction of these projected utilities would physically disturb an estimated 25 acres within the recommended nonsuitable area.

Table 2-10

## Comparative Summary of the Impacts by Alternative - Ireteba Peaks

ISSUE TOPICS	PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)	ALL WILDERNESS	PARTIAL WILDERNESS
Impacts on Wilderness Values	Wilderness values of naturalness, and any outstanding opportunities for solitude that exist within 4,800 acres of the WSA would be diminished and, in some instances, lost. The sights, sounds and surface disturbances created by increased motorized recreational use, projected mineral exploration and utility construction and maintenance would negatively impact wilderness values. Desert tortoise would be afforded some protection through mitigative measures and the implementation of future management actions. Wilderness values would be retained within the remaining 10,194 acres of the WSA.	Designation would preserve wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude, and the special features of desert tortoise and sensitive plants that exist within the WSA.	Wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude and the sensitive plant species would be retained within the 10,155 acres of the recommended suitable area. Wilderness values would be lost on the 4,839 acres recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation as continued and increased cross country motorized vehicle use, projected mineral exploration and construction of utilities would negatively impact the area. The desert tortoise would be afforded some protection through mitigative measures and the implementation of future management actions.
Impacts on Exploration for and Development of Non- Energy Mineral Resources	Mineral resources within the WSA would be available for exploration and development. Exploration for precious metals is projected to occur within the WSA. There are no projected adverse impacts on the exploration for and development of mineral resources.	Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. Development of precious metal resources is not projected to take place.	Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration for precious metals is projected within the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA. There are no projected adverse impacts on the exploration of mineral resources within this area. Development of precious metal resources is not projected to take place within either the recommended suitable or nonsuitable areas.

Table 2-10 Continued

## Comparative Summary of the Impacts by Alternative - Ireteba Peaks

ISSUE TOPICS	PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)	ALL WILDERNESS	PARTIAL WILDERNESS
Impacts on Motorized Recreational Use	Motorized recreational use would benefit under the Proposed Action. No adverse impacts to this use is expected to occur.	Motorized recreational use of 65 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.	Motorized recreational use would be eliminated on the 10,155 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation and approximately 15 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.
Impacts on Development of Utilities	The development of utilities could occur as a result of the entire WSA being recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation. No adverse impacts to these uses are expected to occur.	Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the WSA would be unavailable for the development of utilities. Less desirable routes would be utilized by potential utility users.	The development of utilities could occur as a result of the recommended nonsuitable area not being designated wilderness. No adverse impacts to this use are expected to occur.
Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise	Loss of thirty acres of habitat due to mineral exploration and motorized vehicle use.	Increased protection of tortoise habitat and no loss of habitat due to mining or vehicle use.	Loss of thirty acres of habitat due to mineral exploration and motorized vehicle use.

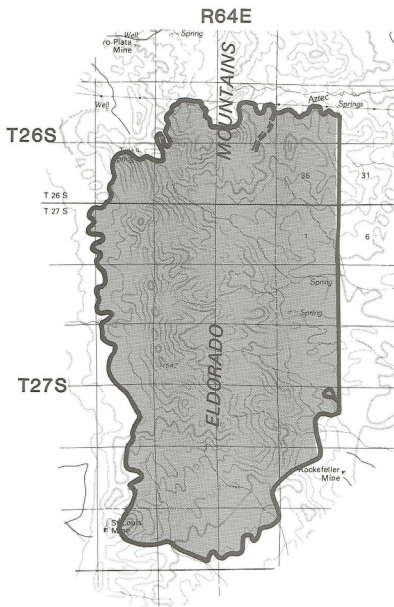
A topographic map of the Colorado Plateau region, specifically the area around the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. The map features a grid with Township 26S and 27S, and Range 10E and 11E. The monument boundary is marked by a thick black line. Key geographical features include the 'MOUNTAINS' and 'EL DORADO' labels, contour lines indicating elevation, and various landmarks such as 'Spring', 'Well', 'ro Plata Mine', 'Aspec', 'Spring', 'Rockefeller Mine', and 'St. Louis'. The map also shows a road and a river.



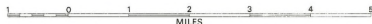
A horizontal scale bar labeled "MILES" with markings from 0 to 5. The bar is divided into five equal segments, each representing one mile. The markings are labeled 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVES  
IRETEBA PEAKS  
NV-050-438



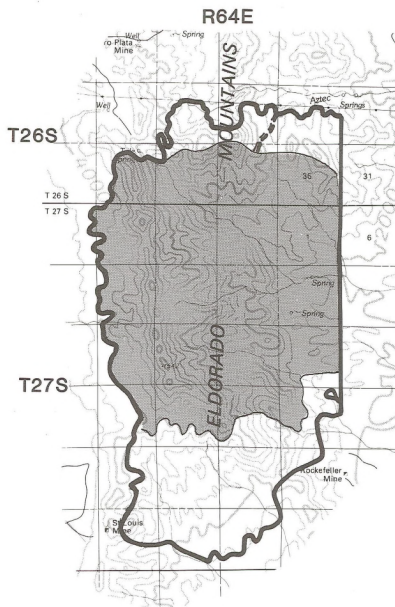


ALL WILDERNESS  
RECOMMENDED SUITABLE

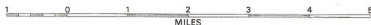


**MAP 2-24**

**ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE  
IRETEBA PEAKS  
NV-050-438**



 **ALTERNATIVE A (PARTIAL)  
RECOMMENDED SUITABLE**



**MAP 2-25**  
**ALTERNATIVE A PARTIAL**  
**WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**  
**IRETEBA PEAKS**  
**NV-050-438**

## **JUMBO SPRINGS WSA (NV-050-236)**

### **PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative)**

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 3,466 acre area as nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-26).

#### **Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions**

The 3,466 acres of the Jumbo Springs WSA recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open to all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. As of 1987, no mining claims existed within the WSA. Exploration for or development of potential minerals is not projected to occur within the WSA due to a general low favorability, lack of interest, absence of mining claims and prospecting activity, and poor marketable location.

#### **Energy Resources Action**

Exploration for or development of potential energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) is not projected to occur as the rock structure of the WSA is not suitable for the accumulation of hydrocarbons.

#### **Recreation Management Actions**

Under the Proposed Action, motorized recreational use could continue within the WSA. The area would be managed through an off-road vehicle management plan and designations (limited use) as specified in the Clark County Management Framework Plan (MFP). Motorized travel within the WSA would be limited to existing roads, ways and washes and competition would be limited to non-speed events. Motorized recreational uses are projected to increase from an estimated 8 to 16 visits annually.

Non-motorized recreational use would continue within the WSA under the Proposed Action. Visitation within the WSA is projected to increase from an estimated 20 to 40 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting, trapping and rockhounding.

#### **Grazing Management Actions**

The Jumbo Springs WSA lies within one grazing allotment, the Gold Butte Allotment (ephemeral). Approximately two percent of the Gold Butte Allotment, which has one permittee, is located within the WSA. The portion of the Gold Butte Allotment located within the WSA would utilize an estimated 55 AUMs for cattle and 54 AUMs for burros. There are no existing or proposed range improvements in the WSA.

#### **Wildlife Management Actions**

The Jumbo Springs WSA offers potential year long bighorn sheep habitat. A 1983 bighorn sheep release plan identified release sites within the WSA. Release of bighorn sheep within the WSA may require the implementation of one water development project. If suitable terrain is found, the water development would utilize a natural slickrock apron. Should natural slickrock not be found, a 30' by 50' camouflaged corrugated tin apron would be placed on the ground. Two painted 1,600 gallon storage tanks would be associated with the water development project.

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Rangeland Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the U.S. (Appendix A). An initial categorization has been completed (8/89) which did not classify any of the Jumbo Springs WSA as either Category I, II or III desert tortoise habitat. Since desert tortoise habitat does exist two miles north and east of the WSA, future population studies may lead to formal categorization of this area.

### **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

All 3,466 acres of public land in the Jumbo Springs WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-27).

### **Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions**

Subject to valid and existing rights, the 3,466 acres of the Jumbo Springs WSA recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws.

There is no known indication of mineralization within the WSA. Exploration for and development of potential locatable minerals are not projected to occur regardless of designation.

### **Energy Resource Actions**

The WSA would be unavailable for energy leasing under the All Wilderness Alternative. Neither exploration nor development of potential energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) is projected to occur as the rock structure of the WSA is not suitable for the accumulation of hydrocarbons.

### **Recreation Management Actions**

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the WSA would be closed to cross country motorized recreational pursuits such as off-road vehicle driving, vehicle camping and vehicular access for hunting, trapping and rock collecting. This would eliminate about 8 visits per year within the WSA. No recreation facilities or developments exist within or are proposed for the WSA.

Non-motorized recreation is projected to increase from 20 to 60 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting, trapping, rockhounding and nature study.

### **Grazing Management Actions**

The Jumbo Springs WSA lies within one grazing allotment, the Gold Butte Allotment (ephemeral). Approximately two percent of the Gold Butte Allotment, which has one permittee, is located within the WSA. The portion of the Gold Butte Allotment located within the WSA would utilize an estimated 55 AUMs for cattle and 54 AUMs for burros. There are no existing or proposed range improvements in the WSA.

### **Wildlife Management Actions**

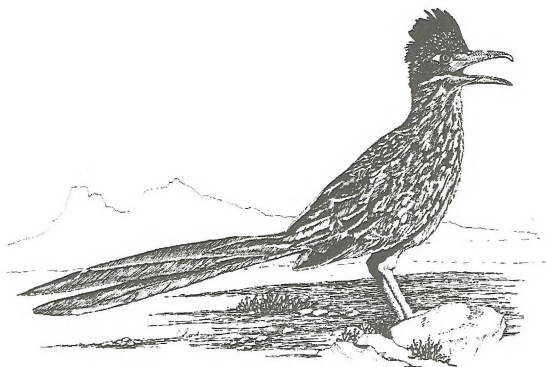
The Jumbo Springs WSA offers potential year long bighorn sheep habitat. A 1983 bighorn sheep release plan identified release sites within the WSA. Release of bighorn sheep within the WSA may require the implementation of one water development project. If suitable terrain is found, the water development would utilize a natural slickrock apron. Should natural slickrock not be found, a 30' by 50' camouflaged corrugated tin apron would be placed on the ground. Two painted 1,600 gallon storage tanks would be associated with the water development project. Construction and yearly maintenance of the water development would be done with non-motorized equipment.

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Rangeland Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the U.S. (Appendix A). An initial categorization has been completed (8/89) which did not classify any of the Jumbo Springs WSA as either Category I, II or III desert tortoise habitat. Since desert tortoise habitat does exist two miles north and east of the WSA, future population studies may lead to formal categorization of this area.

Table 2-11

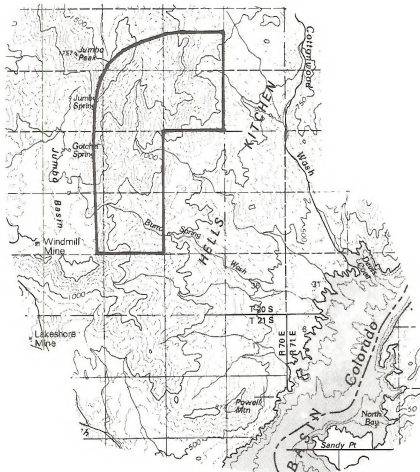
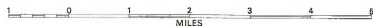
## Comparative Summary of the Impacts by Alternative - Jumbo Springs

IMPACT TOPIC	PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)	ALL WILDERNESS
Impacts on Wilderness Values	No long-term negative impacts to the natural qualities would occur within the Jumbo Springs WSA under the Proposed Action because no surface disturbing actions are projected.	Designation of the Jumbo Springs WSA would preserve the less than outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive unconfined recreation. In addition, the naturalness values that exist within the WSA would be retained.
Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise	No activities which would adversely impact desert tortoise habitat are projected.	Wilderness designation would provide additional protection for desert tortoise through elimination of possible motorized vehicle use.



R70E

T20S



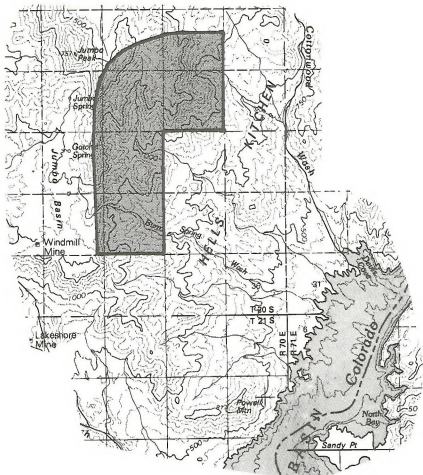
PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)

**MAP 2-26**  
**WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVES**  
**JUMBO SPRINGS**  
**NV-050-236**



R70E

T20S



ALL WILDERNESS  
RECOMMENDED SUITABLE

**MAP 2-27**  
**ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**  
**JUMBO SPRINGS**  
**NV-050-236**

## **NELLIS ABC (NV-050-04R-15)**

### **PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative)**

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 5,718 acre area as unsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-28).

### **Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions**

The 5,718 acres of the Nellis WSA recommended as unsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open to all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. As of 1987, no mining claims existed within the WSA. No known metallic minerals exist within the WSA as the geologic conditions are not favorable for the accumulation of these minerals. Exploration for or development of potential minerals is not projected to occur within the WSA due to lack of interest and prospecting activity.

### **Energy Resource Actions**

Exploration for and development of potential energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) are not projected to occur as the WSA shows a low potential for the accumulation of hydrocarbons and exploratory wells drilled outside the WSA have been unsuccessful.

### **Recreation Management Actions**

Under the Proposed Action, motorized recreational use could continue within the WSA. The area would be managed through an off-road vehicle management plan and designations (limited use) as specified in the Clark County Management Framework Plan (MFP). The ORV designation limits high speed competitive events within the WSA. Motorized recreational uses are projected to increase from an estimated 120 to 170 visits annually.

Non-motorized recreation use is currently estimated at 20 visits annually. It is projected that this use would increase to an estimated 30 visits annually under the Proposed Action. Primary uses would be hunting, target shooting and horseback riding.

### **Grazing Management Actions**

The Nellis ABC WSA lies within one grazing allotment, the Las Vegas Valley Allotment (not-permitted). Approximately 10 percent of the Las Vegas Valley Allotment is within the WSA. The entire Las Vegas Valley Allotment has been withdrawn from grazing during the past five years and an application for ephemeral use is not projected. There are no existing or proposed range improvements in the WSA.

### **Wildlife Management Actions**

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Rangeland Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the U.S. (Appendix A). The entire Nellis ABC WSA has been preliminarily categorized as Category II desert tortoise habitat. The Category II management goal is to maintain stable, viable populations and halt further declines in tortoise habitat. Categorization replaces the existing crucial/noncrucial habitat classification.

### **Realty Management Actions**

Under the Proposed Action utilities could be developed within the WSA. The construction of five 500 kv transmission lines is projected within a utility corridor one mile wide, extending the 7 mile width of the WSA. This projection does not include four buried utility lines (two gas and two fiber optic) included in the draft EIS proposed action projection. It was determined, following additional analysis of the desert tortoise habitat issue, that the impacts resulting from construction of these four lines could not be allowed in a Category II tortoise habitat area so they have been deleted.

Under the Proposed Action a rail line within the WSA could be developed. A possible route for a designated transportation corridor, extending the 7 mile width of the WSA, has been identified by the Department of Energy. Co-location of the railroad and utility lines will be considered.

Specific mitigating measures designed to protect the desert tortoise and minimize impacts to tortoise habitat will include at a minimum:

- 1) Prior to any construction being authorized, a site specific inventory will be conducted to determine the amount of habitat involved, the number of animals at risk and the cumulative effect of proposed and existing projects.
- 2) The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be consulted (Section 7).
- 3) Access road and tower site locations will be located (or relocated) to avoid impacting tortoises.
- 4) In Category I and II areas no net loss of habitat will be allowed. This will require acquisition of new or enhancement of existing habitat to replace habitat lost through disturbance.
- 5) Relocation of individual tortoises at risk to new locations. (Note to reader - Relocation of tortoise has not generally proved successful and is not generally favored by the Fish and Wildlife Service as a primary mitigating measure.)
- 6) Fencing of specific locations (material sites, exploration trenches, etc.) to prevent tortoises from entering disturbed areas.
- 7) Access will be limited to one road within the corridor to be used by all right-of-way holders. Access to individual tower locations will be by the shortest and/or least tortoise impacting route off the common access road.
- 8) Tower to tower travel during survey, design, construction and future maintenance will not be allowed except on the common access road, approved spur roads and in areas cleared for usage as a result of the site specific inventory.
- 9) Rehabilitation of disturbed sites to restore damaged habitat.

"No net loss of habitat" refers to tortoise habitat in all of southern Nevada. Therefore, habitat lost due to actions within WSAs, whether designated wilderness or not, may be mitigated within the WSA or on lands elsewhere in southern Nevada which provide tortoise habitat. Similarly, habitat within WSAs could be enhanced to offset habitat losses in other areas. Both cases will depend on site specific environmental analysis and mitigating measures developed in response to a specific activity proposal.

#### **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

All 5,718 acres of public land in the Nellis ABC WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-29).

#### **Non-Energy Mineral Resources Action**

Subject to valid and existing rights, the 5,718 acres of the Nellis ABC WSA recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. No known metallic minerals exist within the WSA as the geologic conditions are not favorable for the accumulation of these minerals. Exploration for and development of potential mineral resources are not projected to occur.

#### **Energy Resource Actions**

The WSA would be unavailable for energy leasing under the All Wilderness Alternative. Neither exploration nor development of potential energy resources is projected to occur as the WSA shows a low potential for the accumulation of hydrocarbons and exploratory wells drilled outside the area have proved unsuccessful.

#### **Recreation Management Actions**

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the WSA would be closed to cross country motorized recreational pursuits such as off-road vehicle driving and vehicular access for target shooting and hunting. This would eliminate about 120 visits per year within the WSA.

Non-motorized recreation is projected to increase from 20 to 40 visits annually. Primary uses would be target shooting, hunting and horseback riding.

#### **Grazing Management Actions**

The Nellis WSA lies within one grazing allotment, the Las Vegas Valley Allotment (not-permitted). Approximately 10 percent of the Las Vegas Valley Allotment is within the WSA. The entire Las Vegas Valley Allotment has been withdrawn from grazing during the past five years and an application for ephemeral use is not projected. There are no existing or proposed range improvements in the WSA.

#### **Wildlife Management Actions**

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Rangewide Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the U.S. (Appendix A). The entire Nellis ABC WSA has been preliminarily categorized as Category II desert tortoise habitat. The Category II management goal is to maintain stable, viable populations and halt further declines in tortoise habitat. Categorization replaces the existing crucial/noncrucial habitat classification.

#### **Realty Management Actions**

The projected development of utilities or a railroad line would not occur within the area due to wilderness designation.

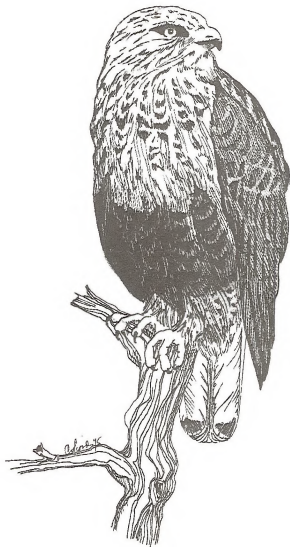


Table 2-12

## Comparative Summary of the Impacts by Alternative - Nellis ABC

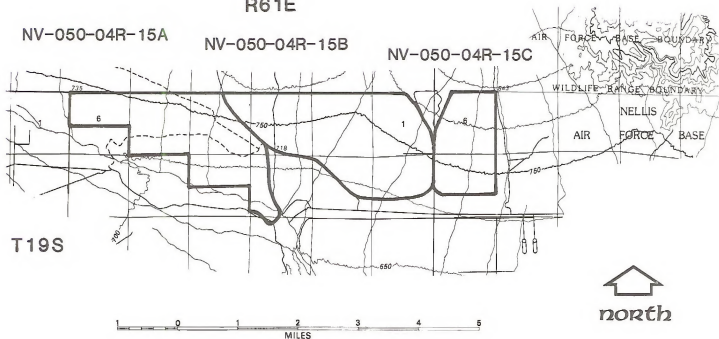
IMPACT TOPIC	PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)	ALL WILDERNESS
Impacts on Wilderness Values	Wilderness values within the WSA would be impacted under the Proposed Action. The projected development of utilities; rail lines, associated access routes, and increased cross country vehicle use would physically disturb an estimated 258 acres within the WSA. The natural perception of the entire WSA would be impaired by the construction of utilities (towers, lines, roads) and rail lines across the landscape. The less than outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be lost due to the audio and visual distractions from the aforementioned activities occurring in the WSA.	Designating the WSA as wilderness would preserve wilderness values of naturalness and would enhance the protection of desert tortoise.
Impacts on Levels of Motorized Recreational Use	Motorized recreational use would benefit from nondesignation as the entire study area would remain open to vehicles and new access routes would be developed in association with projected utilities construction. No adverse impacts to this use is expected to occur.	Motorized recreational use of 120 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. Impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.
Impacts on Development of Utilities	The development of utilities would be possible.	Under the All Wilderness Alternative, utilities could not be developed within the WSA.
Impacts on Development of a Rail Line	Development of a rail line could occur.	Under the All Wilderness Alternative, a rail line could not be developed within the WSA.
Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise	258 acres of habitat would be lost by development activities. The remaining habitat would be seriously fragmented.	Wilderness designation would enhance the protection of desert tortoise by precluding activities such as the development of utilities, a rail line and associated access roads within the WSA.

R61E

NV-050-04R-15A

NV-050-04R-15B

NV-050-04R-15C



PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)

**MAP 2-28**  
**WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVES**  
**NELLIS**  
**NV-050-04R-15A,15B,15C**

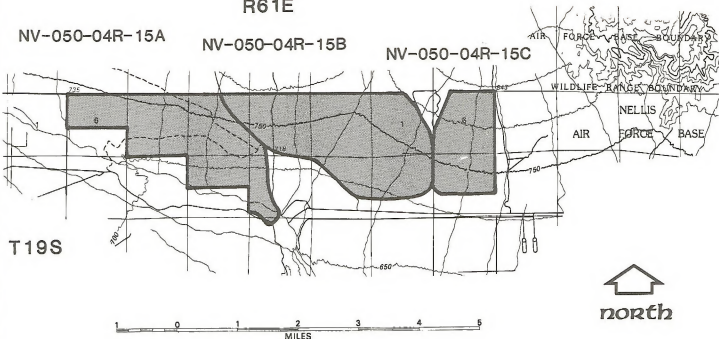


R61E

NV-050-04R-15A

NV-050-04R-15B

NV-050-04R-15C



ALL WILDERNESS  
RECOMMENDED SUITABLE

**MAP 2-29**

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE  
NELLIS

NV-050-04R- 15A, 15B, 15C

## EVERGREEN ABC WSA (NV-050-01R-16)

### PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative)

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 2,694 acre area as unsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-30).

#### Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions

The 2,694 acres of the Evergreen WSA recommended as unsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open to all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. No known metallic and nonmetallic minerals exist within the WSA as the geologic conditions are not favorable for the accumulation of these minerals (GEM 1983). Exploration for or development of potential minerals is not projected to occur within the WSA due to lack of interest, absence of mining claims and prospecting activity.

Extraction of sand and gravel from the one existing (but so far unused) material site is projected and will result in the disturbance of 30 acres. The material site is located on a right-of-way issued in perpetuity and may be developed at the discretion of the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT).

Mitigation designed to protect the desert tortoise and its habitat will be required for any surface disturbing actions and will include the following measures at a minimum:

- 1) Prior to the approval of any plan of operations a site specific survey will be conducted to determine tortoise occurrence.
- 2) The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be consulted (Section 7).
- 3) In Category I and II areas no net loss of habitat will be allowed. This will require acquisition of or enhancement of existing habitat to replace habitat lost through disturbance. This may also require providing replacement material sites for NDOT outside of the crucial tortoise habitat.
- 4) Relocation of individual tortoises at risk to new locations. (Note to reader - Relocation of tortoise has not generally proved successful and is not generally favored by the Fish and Wildlife Service as a primary mitigating measure.)
- 5) Fencing of specific locations (material sites, exploration trenches, etc.) to prevent tortoises from entering disturbed areas.
- 6) Designation of travel routes and closure areas to avoid motorized use in areas of crucial habitat.
- 7) Rehabilitation of disturbed sites to restore damaged habitat.

"No net loss of habitat" refers to tortoise habitat in all of southern Nevada. Therefore, habitat lost due to actions within WSAs, whether designated wilderness or not, may be mitigated within the WSA or on lands elsewhere in southern Nevada which provide tortoise habitat. Similarly, habitat within WSAs could be enhanced to offset habitat losses in other areas. Both cases will depend on site specific environmental analysis and mitigating measures developed in response to a specific activity proposal.

#### Energy Resource Actions

The Evergreen ABC WSA is considered to have moderate favorability for the occurrence of oil and gas and low favorability for the occurrence of geothermal resources (GEM 1983). At present no oil and gas or geothermal leases exist within the WSA. No exploratory wells have been drilled within the WSA or in nearby areas. Exploration for or development of potential energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) is not projected to occur within the WSA.

#### Recreation Management Actions

Under the Proposed Action, motorized recreation use could continue within the WSA as directed by the Caliente Resource Area ORV Designations of 1984 (limited use). Motorized recreational uses are projected to increase from an estimated 35 to 60 visits annually. No recreational facilities exist within or are proposed for the WSA.

Potential management actions could restrict motorized recreational use within the WSA consequential to

categorization of the area's desert tortoise habitat.

Non-motorized recreation use is currently estimated at 10 visits annually. It is projected that this use would increase to an estimated 15 visits annually under the Proposed Action. Primary uses would be hunting and trapping.

#### **Grazing Management Actions**

The Evergreen WSA lies within two grazing allotments, Lower Lake East Allotment (ephemeral) and the Delamar Allotment (ephemeral). Approximately four percent of the Lower Lake East Allotment and less than one percent of the Delamar Allotment are within the WSA. The portion of the Lower Lake East Allotment located within the WSA would utilize an estimated 26 AUMs for cattle and the portion of the Delamar Allotment would utilize an estimated 30 AUMs.

Existing range improvements within the Evergreen WSA consist of one small earthen reservoir. Maintenance of the range improvement requires occasional use of vehicles. No other range improvements exist within the WSA and none are proposed.

#### **Wildlife Management Actions**

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Rangeland Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the U. S. The 2,694 acres of crucial habitat in the WSA have been preliminarily categorized as Category I desert tortoise habitat (see Appendix A). Category I and II habitats require extremely intensive management practices in order to maintain viable populations of desert tortoise. Categorization replaces the existing crucial/noncrucial habitat classification.

#### **Realty Management Actions**

Under the Proposed Action utilities could be developed within the WSA. The construction of five 500 kv transmission lines is projected within a utility corridor one mile wide, extending the 9 mile length of the WSA. This projection does not include four buried utility lines (two gas and two fiber optic) included in the draft EIS proposed action projection. It was determined, following additional analysis of the desert tortoise habitat issue, that the impacts resulting from construction of these four lines could not be allowed in a Category I tortoise habitat area so they have been deleted.

Specific mitigating measures designed to protect the desert tortoise and minimize impacts to tortoise habitat will include at a minimum:

- 1) Prior to any construction being authorized, a site specific inventory will be conducted to determine the amount of habitat involved, the number of animals at risk and the cumulative effect of proposed and existing projects.
- 2) The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be consulted (Section 7).
- 3) Access road and tower site locations will be located (or relocated) to avoid impacting tortoises.
- 4) In Category I and II areas no net loss of habitat will be allowed. This will require acquisition of new or enhancement of existing habitat to replace habitat lost through disturbance.
- 5) Relocation of individual tortoises at risk to new locations. (Note to reader - Relocation of tortoise has not generally proved successful and is not generally favored by the Fish and Wildlife Service as a primary mitigating measure.)
- 6) Fencing of specific locations (material sites, exploration trenches, etc.) to prevent tortoises from entering disturbed areas.
- 7) Access will be limited to one road within the corridor to be used by all right-of-way holders. Access to individual tower locations will be by the shortest and/or least tortoise impacting route off the common access road.
- 8) Tower to tower travel during survey, design, construction and future maintenance will not be allowed except on the common access road, approved spur roads and in areas cleared for usage as a result of the site specific inventory.
- 9) Rehabilitation of disturbed sites to restore damaged habitat.

"No net loss of habitat" refers to tortoise habitat in all of southern Nevada. Therefore, habitat lost due to actions within WSAs, whether designated wilderness or not, may be mitigated within the WSA or on lands elsewhere in southern Nevada which provide tortoise habitat. Similarly, habitat within WSAs could be enhanced to offset habitat losses in other areas. Both cases will depend on site specific environmental analysis and mitigating measures developed in response to a specific activity proposal.

#### **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

All 2,694 acres of public land in the Evergreen WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-31).

#### **Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions**

Subject to valid existing rights, the 2,694 acres of the Evergreen WSA recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. No known metallic and nonmetallic minerals exist within the WSA as the geologic conditions are not favorable for the accumulation of these minerals (GEM 1983). Exploration for and development of potential mineral resources are not projected to occur.

#### **Energy Resource Actions**

The WSA would be withdrawn from energy leasing under the All Wilderness Alternative. Exploration for and development of potential energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal) would not occur.

#### **Recreation Management Actions**

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire WSA would be closed to cross country motorized recreational pursuits such as off-road vehicle driving, vehicle camping, and vehicular access for hunting and trapping. This would eliminate about 35 visits per year within the WSA. Vehicular use would continue along the WSA's boundary roads.

Non-motorized recreation is projected to increase from 10 to 25 visits annually. Primary uses would be hunting and nature study.

#### **Grazing Management Actions**

The Evergreen WSA lies within two grazing allotments, Lower Lake East Allotment (ephemeral) and the Delamar Allotment (ephemeral). Approximately four percent of the Lower Lake East Allotment and less than one percent of the Delamar Allotment are within the WSA. The portion of the Lower Lake East Allotment located within the WSA would utilize an estimated 26 AUMs for cattle and the portion of the Delamar Allotment would utilize an estimated 30 AUMs.

Existing range improvements within the Evergreen WSA consist of one small earthen reservoir. Maintenance of the range improvement may require the occasional use of motorized equipment. No other range improvements exist within the WSA and none are proposed.

#### **Wildlife Management Actions**

Beginning in 1989, in response to the November 1988 "Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On the Public Lands: A Rangeland Plan", BLM and other agencies will start categorizing all desert tortoise habitat in the U. S. The 2,694 acres of crucial habitat in the WSA have been preliminarily categorized as Category I desert tortoise habitat (see Appendix A). Category I and II habitats require extremely intensive management practices in order to maintain viable populations of desert tortoise. Categorization replaces the existing crucial/noncrucial habitat classification.

#### **Realty Management Actions**

The projected development of utilities would not occur within the WSA.

Extraction of sand and gravel from the one existing (but so far unused) material site is projected and will result in the disturbance of 30 acres. The material site is located on a right-of-way issued in perpetuity and

may be developed at the discretion of the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT).

Mitigation designed to protect the desert tortoise and its habitat will be required for any surface disturbing actions and will include the following measures at a minimum:

- 1) Prior to sand and gravel removal, a site specific survey will be conducted to determine tortoise occurrence.
- 2) The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be consulted (Section 7).
- 3) In Category I and II areas no net loss of habitat will be allowed. This will require acquisition of or enhancement of existing habitat to replace habitat lost through disturbance. This may also require providing replacement material sites for NDOT outside of the crucial tortoise habitat.
- 4) Relocation of individual tortoises at risk to new locations. (Note to reader - Relocation of tortoise has not generally proved successful and is not generally favored by the Fish and Wildlife Service as a primary mitigating measure.)
- 5) Fencing of material sites to prevent tortoises from entering.
- 6) Rehabilitation of disturbed sites to restore damaged habitat.

"No net loss of habitat" refers to tortoise habitat in all of southern Nevada. Therefore, habitat lost due to actions within WSAs, whether designated wilderness or not, may be mitigated within the WSA or on lands elsewhere in southern Nevada which provide tortoise habitat. Similarly, habitat within WSAs could be enhanced to offset habitat losses in other areas. Both cases will depend on site specific environmental analysis and mitigating measures developed in response to a specific activity proposal.

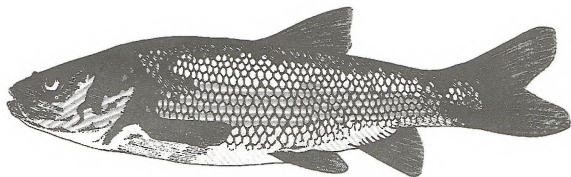


Table 2-13

## Comparative Summary of the Impacts by Alternative - Evergreen ABC

IMPACT TOPIC	PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)	ALL WILDERNESS
Impacts on Wilderness Values	Wilderness values within the WSA would be impaired under the Proposed Action. The projected development of utilities, increased cross country vehicle use and extraction of sand and gravel would physically disturb approximately 322 acres within the entire WSA. The natural perception of the entire WSA would be impaired by the construction of utilities (towers, lines, roads) across the landscape. The less than outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be further diminished by the audio and visual distractions from the aforementioned activities occurring in the WSA.	Designating the WSA as wilderness would preserve values of naturalness and would enhance protection of desert tortoise. Extraction of sand and gravel is projected to physically disturb an estimated 30 acres. The visual perception of naturalness would be impaired on the entire WSA. Opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation within the entire WSA would be diminished during periods of active sand and gravel operations due to audio and visual distractions.
Impacts on Levels of Motorized Recreational Use	Motorized recreational use could continue within the WSA under the Proposed Action, benefiting this activity. However, potential and discretionary management actions may restrict this use as a result of categorization of the area's tortoise habitat.	Motorized recreational use of 35 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.
Impacts on Development of Utilities	The proposed action would allow the development of five transmission lines in the WSA, however, four buried utility lines would not be developed because of unacceptable impacts on desert tortoise in Category I habitat.	Under the All Wilderness Alternative, utilities could not be developed within the WSA.
Impacts on Existing Material Site Rights-of-Way	No impact to use of existing material site right-of-way subject to mitigation for the desert tortoise.	No impact to use of existing material site right-of-way subject to mitigation for the desert tortoise.
Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise	322 acres of Category I desert tortoise habitat would be lost due to utility development, sand and gravel extraction and motorized recreational use.	30 acres of Category I habitat would be lost due to the extraction of sand and gravel from an existing material site.



R62E



T9S

NV-050-01R-16A

T10S

NV-050-01R-16B

NV-050-01R-16C

PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)



**MAP 2-30**

**WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVES  
EVERGREEN**

**NV-050-01R-16A, 16B, 16C**

R62E

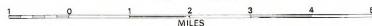
T9S

T10S

NV-050-01R-16B

NV-050-01R-16C

NV-050-01R-16A



ALL WILDERNESS  
RECOMMENDED SUITABLE

**MAP 2-31**

**ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE  
EVERGREEN**

**NV-050-01R-16A, 16B, 16C**

## **LAHONTAN CUTTHROAT TROUT NATURAL AREA (ISA)**

### **PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative)**

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 12,316 acre ISA as nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-32).

### **Mineral and Energy Resource Actions**

The Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Natural Area was placed under mineral segregation on May 25, 1968. This closed the area to all forms of mineral leasing and mining laws. There are no claims within the ISA.

### **Recreation Management Actions**

Motorized recreational use could continue within the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Natural Area ISA. The current use of 50 visits annually is projected to increase to 100 visits annually in the foreseeable future.

Non-motorized recreation use is currently estimated at 200 visits annually. It is projected that this use would increase to an estimated 340 visits annually in the foreseeable future. This use consists primarily of hunting for big game and upland birds.

### **Grazing Management Actions**

Livestock (cattle and sheep) are grazed in two allotments within the ISA. The Soldier Meadows Allotment includes 12,156 acres of the ISA and accounts for approximately 400 AUMs of use. Grazing use has been excluded from the 2,410 acre enclosure located within the allotment. Grazing use in this allotment is not expected to change. The Palute Meadows Allotment covers 160 acres of the ISA and accounts for 10 AUMs of grazing use. This use is expected to remain the same in the foreseeable future.

Maintenance of existing range improvements, consisting of one reservoir, a developed spring and the enclosure fence, would be accomplished as needed, using motorized equipment. It is estimated that this would be required once every two to five years. No new projects are planned for either of the allotments.

### **Wildlife Management Actions**

In 1973, what is now the ISA was designated as the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Natural Area. The purpose of the natural area designation was to provide management to protect the spawning grounds of the Lahontan cutthroat trout, a species of fish rated as threatened on the Federal Threatened and Endangered Species List. A habitat management plan (HMP) was developed which included several protective developments. About twenty percent (2,410 acres) of the ISA around Mahogany Creek was fenced to exclude livestock from the stream's headwaters. Three cattleguards were used to replace the gates in the Enclosure. Gabions were placed in Pole Creek and Summer Camp Creek to repair head cutting and a road crossing. Two fish passes were built to help the trout reach their spawning grounds and water bars were constructed on roads.

A five acre enclosure with a cattleguard was also constructed around the Horseshoe Bend meadow. Continued management would be oriented towards the maintenance and improvement of the fisheries and riparian habitat. Maintenance of these projects would be accomplished with hand tools and occasional motorized access. No new projects are projected.

### **Realty Management Actions**

Private lands in the ISA total 1,256 acres and are situated in five different parcels. Access presently exists along bladed and maintained roads to four of the parcels. It is projected that the private land owner of the fifth parcel would exercise his right to access to his land. A 50 foot right-of-way would be issued for access to the private parcel. Approximately one-tenth of a mile of bladed access would be required, physically disturbing about one-half acre total.

### **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

All 12,316 acres of public land in the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Natural Area ISA would be recommended

suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-33).

#### **Mineral and Energy Resource Actions**

As a result of the 1968 mineral segregation, the ISA is closed to all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. This would continue under the All Wilderness Alternative.

#### **Recreation Management Actions**

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the ISA would be closed to cross country motorized recreational pursuits, including off-road vehicle sightseeing, vehicle camping and vehicular access for hunting and rockhounding. This would eliminate about five visits per year within the ISA. Vehicular use would continue on the 22 miles of cherrystemmed roads. This use is projected to increase from 50 visits annually to about 90 visits annually.

Non-motorized recreation would continue to increase from 200 visits annually to about 340 visits in the foreseeable future. This use is primarily from big game and upland bird hunters.

#### **Grazing Management Actions**

Livestock (cattle and sheep) are grazed in two allotments within the ISA. The Soldier Meadows Allotment includes 12,156 acres of the ISA and accounts for approximately 400 AUMs of use. Grazing use has been excluded from the 2,410 acre enclosure located within the allotment. Grazing use in this allotment is not expected to change. The Paiute Meadows Allotment covers 160 acres of the ISA and accounts for 10 AUMs of grazing use. This use is expected to remain the same in the foreseeable future.

Maintenance of existing range improvements, consisting of one reservoir, a developed spring and the enclosure fence, would be accomplished as needed, however, the use of motorized equipment would not be allowed off of existing cherrystemmed roads. It is estimated that this would be required once every two to five years. No new projects are planned for either of the allotments.

#### **Wildlife Management Actions**

Wildlife management would be oriented toward maintaining and improving the Lahontan Cutthroat trout habitat. Maintenance of developments would be done with hand tools. Vehicle use off existing cherrystemmed roads would not be allowed. No new wildlife developments are projected for the ISA.

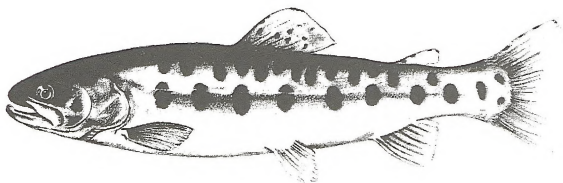
#### **Realty Management Actions**

Private lands in the ISA total 1,256 acres and are situated in five different parcels. Access presently exists along bladed and maintained roads to four of the parcels. It is projected that the private land owner of the fifth parcel would exercise his right to access his land. A 20 foot right-of-way would be issued for access to the private parcel. Approximately one-tenth of a mile of access would be required. The minimum width necessary for development would be used, physically disturbing up to a total of two-tenths of an acre.

Table 2-14

## Comparative Summary of the Impacts by Alternative - Lahontan Cutthroat Trout ISA

IMPACT TOPIC	PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)	ALL WILDERNESS
Impacts on Wilderness Values	The marginal wilderness values of the ISA would be further reduced by the increase in motorized use within the area. The special feature of the Lahontan Cutthroat trout would not be affected. Existing management would continue to protect the trout habitat.	Designation of the ISA as wilderness would benefit the values of naturalness and solitude by the preclusion of off-road, cross country travel within the ISA. However, overall wilderness values in this largely roaded area would remain low. The special feature of the Lahontan Cutthroat trout would be preserved.
Impacts on Motorized Recreational Use	There would be no impact on motorized recreational use.	The impacts to motorized recreational use would be negligible, eliminating less than 10 percent of the existing use.
Impacts on Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Habitat	There would be no impact on the Lahontan Cutthroat habitat.	There would be no impact to the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout habitat from the designation of the ISA as wilderness.



T42N

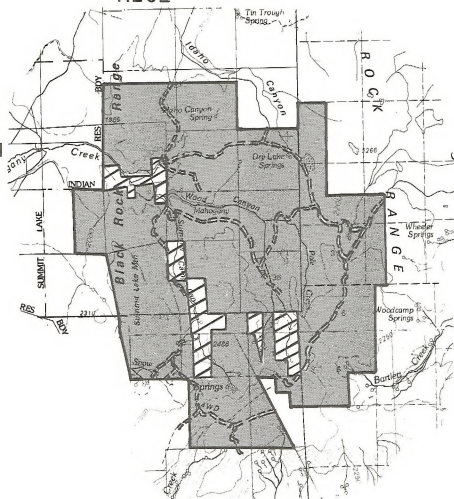


**MAP 2-32**  
**WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVES**  
**LAHONTAN ISA**



R26E

T42N



ALL WILDERNESS  
RECOMMENDED SUITABLE

**MAP 2-33**

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE  
LAHONTAN ISA

# CHAPTER 3

## AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

### MARBLE CANYON WSA (NV-040-086)

#### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

The Marble Canyon WSA (Map 3-1) lies directly north of Mt. Moriah, within White Pine County, Nevada, approximately 300 miles from Salt Lake City, Utah and Las Vegas, Nevada. The WSA contains 19,150 acres of public land and is approximately 5 miles long and 8 miles wide. Topographically, the study area is a complex array of canyons, jumbled peaks, and drainages, dotted with juniper, pinyon pine and mountain mahogany. The highest point in the area, Thunder Mountain (9,331 feet), is located on a long ridge that crosses the study area's center. The ridge supports Douglas fir, white fir, bristlecone pine and limber pine. Access to the WSA is provided by three dirt boundary roads and 4 miles of cherrystemmed roads. There are no private or State lands within the WSA.

#### WILDERNESS VALUES

##### Naturalness

The majority of the Marble Canyon WSA is in an extremely natural condition. Within the WSA itself, evidence of man's activities is minimal. Much of the area is rugged and has impeded development attempts by man. In an area of over 19,000 acres, man-made intrusions include a 1-mile fence in the northeast corner of the area, an abandoned concrete trough in Christmas Canyon and a corral at the mouth of a drainage within Marble Canyon.

Three short ways, each totaling less than 1 mile, and four cherrystemmed roads totalling 3 miles are located along the eastern boundary of the WSA. The presence of the roads and ways along the eastern bench detracts very little from the naturalness of the area. In addition, one short cherrystemmed road accesses a seep at the base of Thunder Mountain on the south-central plateau of the WSA. Naturalness is relatively unaffected by the presence of the road.

In the past, minor quarrying for marble has taken place along Marble and Bars Canyons. Several small quarry scars and areas of blasted rubble exist in these rocky canyons. These disturbances are visible only in their immediate vicinity and essentially blend in with natural surroundings. In the southeast corner of the WSA a small mining adit was blasted. Aside from these intrusions, the area appears to be untrammelled by man and his works.

##### Solitude

The rugged topographic features of the Marble Canyon WSA insure outstanding opportunities for solitude. The northern and central region of the WSA is characterized by sparsely forested plateaus and divides cut by massive canyons. The impressive Bars Canyon, slices through the unit and its limestone and marble walls drop nearly 800 feet to the canyon's floor. Major side canyons equally as deep branch off and wander for additional miles. Each turn of these tortuous canyons isolate the visitor further and further. The cliffs are pocketed with shelter caves, expansive ledges, and huge natural amphitheaters. Other major canyons, including Marble and Coyote Canyons, have similar topographic isolation.

Vegetative screening varies throughout the WSA. Pockets of white fir, Douglas fir, bristlecone pine, limber pine and mountain mahogany are found at higher elevations on most of the ridges within the WSA.

Opportunities for a visitor to find a secluded spot are dependent on topographic and vegetative screening. The deeply incised terrain and dense vegetative screening of the northern, central and eastern regions of the WSA create the best locales for experiencing a sense of solitude and seclusion. The broad, low-sage covered plateau, nestled between the two main arms of Bar Canyon in the southwest corner of the study

area, and the sparsely vegetated east bench are the only areas where opportunities for solitude would be diminished.

#### **Primitive and Unconfined Recreation**

Recreational opportunities in the Marble Canyon WSA are very good and quite varied, but are not considered outstanding. Most recreational use would be concentrated along the two main canyons (Bar and Marble Canyons), the forested ridgelines, and the sage plateau of the southwest portion. Access by dirt and gravel roads from the north, east and western boundaries would be limited to drier months of the year.

Camping, hiking, cave exploration, climbing, and horseback opportunities are excellent within the major canyons. Sandy canyon bottoms provide travel routes to numerous scenic camping spots and shelter caves. For more hardy explorers, the tremendous range of cliff faces afford innumerable climbing opportunities. The canyon rims offer protected pockets of coniferous forests as cool, moist retreats from the canyon's heat.

Wildlife related recreational activities such as bird watching, wildlife studies, photography, hunting and trapping are all good. The cliffs host populations of raptors, including golden eagles, red-tailed hawks and great horned owls, as well as numerous smaller birds such as swallows, chickadees and towhees. A variety of mammals, including ringtail cats, mountain lions, Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, antelope, and kit foxes can be seen in the WSA. Photographic subject matter ranges from dramatic rock arches and gnarled bristlecone pines to stooping prairie falcons and ancient pictographs. The overall character of the study area is scenic, providing several types of landscapes suitable for a variety of recreational uses.

#### **Supplemental Values**

The Marble Canyon WSA contains several supplemental values. Ecologically, the area supports abundant raptor populations and was the historical range for the peregrine falcon, although none have been documented within the WSA. The raptor habitat is primarily located within the high rugged and inaccessible cliffs of the WSA. Bristlecone pines, in all forms and all ages, grow along the high central ridge.

Unique geologic features enhance the scenic qualities of the review area. Deep canyons of folded and metamorphosed limestone drop precipitously to the canyon floors.

Cultural resource values identified within the WSA include Late Prehistoric Fremont and Numic pictographs, rock shelters and open campsites. The pictographs within the WSA represent the most northern occurrence of prehistoric rock art within the Snake Range of eastern Nevada.

#### **MINERAL RESOURCES**

The Marble Canyon WSA is the northern terminus of the massive Snake Range. Thrusted Paleozoic marine sediments are flanked by Tertiary volcanic outcrops in the northeastern part of the WSA and alluvial materials to the east, north and west. The predominant rock type in the area is limestone, locally metamorphosed into marble.

The entire Marble Canyon WSA is classified as having a low favorability for metallic minerals (Map 3-2). There are no known metallic mineral deposits in the WSA. The northeast portion of the WSA has been rated as having a moderate to high potential for marble. This includes approximately 1,915 acres with high potential for marble and about 5,745 acres with moderate potential. Currently 26 mining claims are located within the WSA (Map 3-3). Eighteen of the claims are placer claims for marble, located in the north-central portion of the WSA. The marble is considered to be low grade, suitable for crushing or use as decorative stone. Minor quarrying has taken place in the past but there is no recorded production of marble within the WSA. (GEM, 1983).

#### **ENERGY RESOURCES**

No known oil and gas, geothermal, uranium or thorium deposits occur within the WSA (GEM, 1983). There are no existing or pending oil, gas or geothermal leases in the WSA.

### RECREATION VALUES

There are no developed recreation facilities within or adjacent to the WSA. Traditional forms of recreation such as sightseeing, camping, and hunting occur within the WSA. This use is estimated to be 25 visits annually. Access by dirt and gravel roads is limited to the drier months of the year.

### LIVESTOCK GRAZING

The Marble Canyon WSA lies within three grazing allotments, each has one permittee. Approximately 5 percent of the Muncy Creek Allotment is located within the WSA, which is grazed year-round utilizing an estimated 12,384 AUMs for its entirety. Twenty-one percent of the Smith Creek Allotment occurs within the WSA and is grazed fall-spring with 3,989 AUMs of use for the entire allotment. The Devil's Gate Allotment is grazed winter-spring with 1,810 AUMs administered in the Nevada portion.

Current grazing levels within these three allotments are not expected to change in the future. Existing range improvements within the Marble Canyon WSA include 1 mile of fence, a small corral and abandoned cement trough.

### WILDLIFE RESOURCES

The Marble Canyon WSA provides approximately 16,000 acres of bighorn sheep winter habitat. The eastern bench of the unit is key pronghorn antelope winter range. As mentioned in the recreation section above, the area provides excellent habitat for raptors. Numerous game birds such as blue grouse, sage grouse and chukars are also present. In addition to antelope, mule deer and Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, there is the potential for elk to migrate into the WSA from the south.

### LANDS AND REALTY

There are no parcels of private land located adjacent to or within the boundaries of the WSA. The southern portion of the WSA is contiguous with the Moriah Unit of the Humboldt National Forest.

### THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

There are no threatened or endangered species found within the WSA. There is a State listed sensitive species, Moriah penstemon (*Penstemon moriahensis*) found near the WSA. This species may also occur within the WSA as well, though it has not been documented.

### CULTURAL RESOURCES

Cultural resource values identified within the WSA include Late Prehistoric Fremont and Numic pictographs, rock shelters and open campsites. No formal cultural resource inventories have been conducted in the WSA.

### WATER SOURCES

No comprehensive water inventory has been conducted in the Marble Canyon WSA. Several seeps have been developed in the area and additional intermittent seeps can be found along canyon walls.

## FISH AND WILDLIFE NO. 1, 2 and 3 (NV-050-201, 216 and 217)

### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

These three WSAs (Maps 3-4, 3-8 & 3-12) form a consolidated strip of land along the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Desert National Wildlife Range. Because the three units comprise one larger, cohesive area, they are discussed jointly here.

Fish and Wildlife No. 1, 2 and 3 run in a long, narrow strip between the USFWS Desert National Wildlife Range and U.S. Hwy. 93, about 35 miles north of Las Vegas. As a total unit, the area is about 45 miles long and three miles wide at its widest point. Fish and Wildlife No. 1 contains 11,090 acres, No. 2 contains 17,242 acres and No. 3 contains 22,002 acres, totalling 50,334 acres of public land. Most of the area consists of flat, gently sloping bajadas extending from the west to the eastern boundary at U.S. Hwy. 93. The only mountain range, the Las Vegas Range, occurs in the central portion of Fish and Wildlife No. 2. These are low mountains, elevations range from 2,000 to 4,560 feet, with typical Great Basin shrub type vegetation. This includes Yucca, cactus and Joshua trees. There are two shelter caves found in the area. Low lying intermittent buttes and hills, plus the mountain range provide the only diversity found in the area.

### WILDERNESS VALUES

#### Naturalness

The areas are primarily natural with few man-made intrusions. There are 9 ways which extend into the area from the eastern and southern boundaries. The majority of these ways (12.9 miles) occur in the Fish and Wildlife No. 3 WSA. There are two wells which have been abandoned in the Fish and Wildlife No. 1 WSA, and one in Fish and Wildlife No. 3. These are all substantially unnoticeable in the area as a whole. In Fish and Wildlife No. 1, there are three existing material sites with rights-of-way and one material site within Fish and Wildlife No. 3, all issued to the Nevada State Department of Transportation for sand and gravel. To date no use of these sites has occurred within the WSAs, however, if use were to occur, naturalness would be disturbed in the area.

#### Solitude

The size of the WSAs are such that each provides opportunities for solitude. The three units together provide outstanding opportunities for solitude. Opportunities are somewhat limited due to the configuration of the units, and are primarily found in the central core area, away from Hwy. 93 and the ways found in the southern end. The topography and vegetation provide for minimal screening.

#### Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Recreational opportunities in the unit are fair for such activities as horseback riding, hiking, camping, nature study and sightseeing. All of the areas provide easy access for these activities, however there are limited areas of interest or destination points within the unit. The Las Vegas Range in Fish and Wildlife No. 2 would most likely be the destination point. Other visits could be riders passing through the area to reach the Desert National Wildlife Range. Areas of interest to visitors for hiking and sightseeing would be the shelter caves found in Fish and Wildlife No. 2 and 3 and the bighorn sheep in the Hidden Valley area. Primitive recreational use for the combined study areas is estimated to be 60 visits annually.

#### Supplemental Values

Fish and Wildlife No. 2 and 3 supports a small heard of bighorn sheep in the Las Vegas Range and Hidden Valley area. Approximately 80 - 90 sheep inhabit these areas.

The desert tortoise (Gopherus agassizii) occurs within all three WSAs. In August 1989 the desert tortoise was emergency listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS).

A sensitive species, currently listed on the "Federal Register of Threatened and Endangered Species", has been identified within the WSAs. One variety of penstemon (Penstemon bicolor ssp. roseus) is included as Category 2 (Watch) listings on the Federal Register.



Cultural resources include several sites consisting of lithic scatters, a rock alignment, some points and flakes and midden. The most important of the sites is Flaherty Shelter Cave. This cave was excavated in 1969 and 1972 by the University of Nevada, Las Vegas field classes and has been dated back to 10 B.C. None of these areas are currently listed on the National Register and there are no plans to list them in the near future.

#### **MINERAL RESOURCES**

There are four mining claims which occur in the southern portion of the Fish and Wildlife No. 1 WSA. (Maps 3-5, 3-9 and 3-13). To date, no development has taken place on any of these.

The entire unit has no known, or low favorability for the occurrence of precious metallic mineral (GEM, 1983) (Maps 3-6, 3-10 and 3-14). The area does have moderate favorability for the occurrence of sand and gravel (GEM, 1983). However, the favorability of these materials closer to the Las Vegas market has not created sufficient demand to make these deposits of value for commercial exploitation.

#### **ENERGY RESOURCES**

The entire unit has low to moderate potential for oil and gas or geothermal resources (GEM, 1983). There are no active leases in any of the three WSAs.

#### **RECREATION VALUES**

All of this area has received off-road vehicle use in the past. Most use is concentrated in washes and along existing ways. The powerline road which skirts the far southern end of Fish and Wildlife No. 3 has been used in the past as part of the Mint 400 ORV race course. Most of this use occurs along the boundaries of the study areas, and will likely continue. The area is designated for "limited use" under the off-road vehicle management plan and designation as specified in the Clark County Management Framework Plan (MFP). The designation limits the type and location of competitive high speed events. Total motorized recreational use in the study areas amounts to about 180 visits per year. There are no developed recreation sites within the area and none are planned to be completed.

#### **LIVESTOCK GRAZING**

The three WSAs within this unit have existing grazing use within three allotments. Fish and Wildlife No. 1 and 2 contain the combined portions of the Arrow Canyon Allotment located in Fish and Wildlife NO. 1 and 2, utilizes an estimated 60 AUMs. The Dry Lake allotment has a small portion in Fish and Wildlife No. 3 (about seven percent). It utilizes an estimated 14 AUMs total for the allotment. Portions of Fish and Wildlife No. 2 and 3 are located within the Pittman Well Allotment, which has not been permitted in over five years. Each of these allotments has one permittee. There are no range improvements within the WSA. There are no AMPs for these allotments and no future improvements are planned.

#### **WILDLIFE RESOURCES**

Fish and Wildlife No. 2 and 3 both contain bighorn sheep winter habitat. This is concentrated along the Elbow Range and in Hidden Valley. Resident herds number about 80 - 90 animals. Two water developments are proposed within the WSA to support the sheep population. The implementation of the of the water developments will be addressed in the Habitat Management Plan being developed for the area. The combined study area, excluding the mountain range, has been identified as Category I desert tortoise habitat (Maps 3-7, 3-11 and 3-15). In November 1988 a four State (Nevada, Utah, California, and Arizona) rangewide habitat plan ("Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On The Public Lands: A Rangewide Plan") was adopted by the BLM. (See Appendix A). This Rangewide Plan provides objectives and management actions to be used by the Bureau to improve the status of the tortoise on public lands. In August 1989 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service emergency listed the desert tortoise as an endangered species. Preliminary categorization of tortoise habitat in accordance with the rangewide plan and the subsequent endangered species listing has identified all of the Fish and Wildlife WSAs as Category I desert tortoise habitat.

There are no existing wildlife habitat developments within the study areas.



#### LANDS AND REALTY

The Western Regional Corridor Study completed for Nevada in 1986 has identified a good portion of the unit for a possible utility corridor. Fish and Wildlife No 1 and 3 have material sites with rights-of-way issued to the Nevada Department of Transportation. There are no private land holdings within the unit.

The area does have moderate potential for sand and gravel deposits. Four rights-of-way for extraction of sand and gravel were issued to the Nevada Department of Transportation for road maintenance. These rights-of-way were issued prior to 1976 and may be utilized in perpetuity. However, the availability of these materials closer to the Las Vegas market has not created sufficient demand to make these deposits of value for commercial exploitation.

The western boundaries of the WSAs are contiguous to the Fish and Wildlife Service Desert National Game Range proposed wilderness Unit III- Sheep Range and Unit II- Vegas Range (Desert Wilderness Proposal Desert National Wildlife Range - October 1971).

#### THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES (SEE WILDLIFE)

A sensitive species, currently listed on the "Federal Register of Threatened and Endangered Species", has been identified within the WSAs. One variety of penstemon (Penstemon bicolor ssp. roseus) is included as Category 2 (Watch) listing on the Federal Register.

#### CULTURAL RESOURCES

There are several cultural sites found within study areas. These are mostly lithic scatters, a rock alignment and points and flakes. The Flaherty Shelter Cave, which has been dated back to 10 B.C., is found in Fish and Wildlife No. 2. None of these sites have been nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

#### WATER SOURCES

There are no perennial or intermittent springs or streams in the WSAs.

## **LIME CANYON WSA (NV-050-231)**

### **GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS**

The Lime Canyon WSA is located east of the Overton Arm portion of Lake Mead and northwest of Gold Butte in Clark County, Nevada. The total acres within the unit amount to 35,518; 34,680 acres of public land and 838 acres of private inholdings.

The Old Gold Butte Road forms the northern and eastern boundaries of the unit, the southern boundary follows a road, drainage and contour lines. The unit lies along the western boundary of the National Park Service Lake Mead National Recreation Area. At its widest point the WSA is 7 miles, tapering to 2.5 miles at the northern end. It approaches 13 miles long. Access to the WSA is provided by well traveled roads and 12.7 miles of ways, mostly located in the southwestern portion of the unit.

Topographically, the unit consists of small, rugged drainages, gently rolling hills, two paralleling ridgelines, a narrow canyon and several wide, sandy washes. Lime Ridge offers outstanding scenic vistas of Lake Mead to the south and west and the Muddy Mountains beyond the National Recreation Area. Lime Canyon offers colorful rock strata and dynamic geologic formations. Historic faulting and erosion have exposed a variety of sediment deposits throughout the unit. Vegetation is typical of Mojave Desert type with some intermittent areas of Joshua trees.

### **WILDERNESS VALUES**

#### **Naturalness**

The most pristine portion of the WSA occurs in the central portion along the ridges and in the canyons. In this part of the study area there are no man-made intrusions.

Along the boundaries and lower portions of the WSA, there are several intrusions. Eight ways extend into the WSA for a total of 12.7 miles. The longest occurs across the bajada and wide washes in the southwest corner of the unit. A short fenceline crosses the eastern boundary at about the center of the unit, and another crosses at the eastern corner near Gold Butte. A short gap fence crosses the mouth of Lime Canyon. Two upland game bird water developments and an earthen reservoir are found in the southern and eastern fringes of the WSA.

#### **Solitude**

The Lime Canyon WSA provides a large diversity of topography which ranges from small, rugged drainages to gently rolling hills. Two paralleling ridge lines extend the length of the WSA to the narrow canyon and several wide washes on the edge of the unit. This provides excellent topographical screening. The central and northern portion (10,000 acres) provides the maximum topographic screening and secluded areas where outstanding opportunities for solitude occur. The most prominent secluded areas occur along Lime Ridge, which dissects the length of the WSA. Excellent opportunities also exist in Lime Canyon.

Vegetation within the unit is typical of the Mojave Desert, including cactus, creosote, ephemeral grasses, scattered Joshua trees and yucca plants. The low growing vegetation provides nominal screening, except along the eastern boundary where intermittent stands of Joshua provide better screening.

#### **Primitive and Unconfined Recreation**

There are numerous opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreational activities, including day hikes, backpacking, nature study, hunting and photography. Outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation occur mostly in the central portion of the study area along the major ridgelines, canyons, drainages and rolling hills. The greatest variety of topography, wildlife and points of interest are located within this portion of the WSA. Hiking or backpacking into Lime Ridge would provide outstanding experiences by offering varying degrees of difficulty plus scenic and wildlife views.

Photographically, the unit provides a variety of subject matter from wildlife to colorful geologic formations and scenic vistas of Lake Mead and the surrounding area. Hunting opportunities are also available for

upland game birds, particularly Gambel's quail.

#### **Supplemental Values**

Lime Ridge and the attendant Lime Canyon offer unique scenic and geologic features. The desert tortoise (Gopherus agassizii) occurs several miles to the northeast of the WSA and was emergency listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in August 1989. The gila monster (Heloderma suspectum) and the golden bear poppy (Arctomecon californica), currently listed on the "Federal Register of Threatened and Endangered Species" as Category 2 (Watch), have been identified within the WSA.

#### **MINERAL RESOURCES**

There are five lode claims located within the WSA (Map 3-17). There currently are three undeveloped patented mining claims (838 acres) within the WSA, all for gypsum.

The Lime Canyon WSA has moderate favorability for the occurrence of non-metallic minerals. There is low favorability for precious and base metals (GEM, 1983) (Map 3-18). Abundant deposits of paleozoic limestone and dolomite have low development potential. Similar deposits closer to markets make these deposits of lower value. There are small deposits of uranium reported within the WSA.

#### **ENERGY RESOURCES**

The potential for hydrocarbon occurrence is considered low within the WSA (GEM, 1983). No wells have been drilled in the area, and there are no existing leases within the WSA. However exploratory drilling activity is occurring outside the WSA to the east near Tramp Ridge.

#### **RECREATION VALUES**

There are no developed recreation sites within the WSA. Motorized recreational use within the WSA occurs along the boundaries, washes and established trails. The majority of this use comes from hunters and rockhounds. This use accounts for 180 visits annually in the WSA. The area is designated for "limited use" under the off-road vehicle management plan and designation as specified in the Clark County Management Framework Plan (MFP).

Non-motorized types of recreation such as hiking, backpacking, hunting and sightseeing, occur within the WSA. Access is provided by well maintained roads and ways. About 60 visits annually are attributed to primitive recreation.

#### **LIVESTOCK GRAZING**

The Lime Canyon WSA lies within the Gold Butte Allotment. About 20 percent of the allotment is contained within the WSA boundary. The portion of the allotment located within the WSA utilizes an estimated 218 AUMs for cattle and an estimated 219 AUMs for burros. The allotment has one permittee. Range improvements associated with the allotment include three fencelines, one developed spring and a small earthen reservoir; all located in the southern and eastern edges of the WSA.

A Range Allotment Evaluation was completed for the Gold Butte Allotment (encompassing the Lime Canyon WSA) in 1988. An Allotment Management Plan (AMP) for the area is scheduled for completion in 1990.

The WSA also lies within the Gold Butte Herd Area for wild horses and burros.

#### **WILDLIFE RESOURCES**

The WSA provides excellent habitat for Gambel's quail. Two bird drinkers have been installed in the WSA in support of those game species.

As bighorn sheep were historically present in this range, the species has been targeted for reintroduction by the Nevada Department of Fish and Wildlife. A 1983 Site Release Plan identified the Lime Canyon WSA as a potential release site for bighorn sheep. Three water developments are planned within the WSA to support the reintroduction of the sheep. A combined wildlife Habitat Management Plan (HMP) which will

include desert tortoise and bighorn sheep is planned for the Gold Butte area in 1988.

The desert tortoise was emergency listed as an endangered species in August 1989. While it is likely that desert tortoise occur in the area, preliminary categorization of tortoise habitat in the WSA has not identified any Category I, II or III desert tortoise habitat in the Lime Canyon WSA (Map 3-19).

#### LANDS AND REALTY

There are three undeveloped patented mining claims consisting of 838 acres within the WSA. These are located along the eastern edge of the lower ridge in the WSA.

The Lime Canyon WSA is contiguous along its western boundary to the National Park Service Lake Mead National Recreation Area (NRA). The NRA Final Environmental Impact Statement - General Management Plan released in July 1986 identified these lands as meeting the criteria of the Wilderness Act of 1964. The Management Zoning areas identified in the General Management Plan places these lands within the Environmental Protection and Natural Environment Subzones. A wilderness plan will be prepared for the NRA following completion of the General Management Plan.

#### THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES (SEE WILDLIFE)

The golden bear poppy (Arctomecon californica), a Category 2 Watch species has been identified in an area along the WSA's eastern boundary road. A gila monster (Heloderma suspectum) a Category 2 candidate, was sighted on Lime Ridge in 1980 (U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Draft EIS comment).

#### CULTURAL RESOURCES

No cultural resource surveys have been conducted in the WSA, and no known sites have been recorded.

#### WATER SOURCES

There are no perennial or intermittent streams in the WSA.

## MILLION HILLS WSA (NV-050-233)

### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

The Million Hills WSA (Map 3-20) is located east of Overton Arm in the Gold Butte area. It contains 21,296 acres of public land, approximately 45 miles east of metropolitan Las Vegas. The WSA meets the Arizona/Nevada state line to the east, the Bureau of Reclamation withdrawal forms the southern boundary and the National Park Service Lake Mead National Recreation Area forms the southeastern corner. Formed in an elongated shape, the WSA is wide at its center (six miles) by approximately 10 miles at its longest reaches. Access to the WSA is provided by well maintained roads and ways.

Topography of the area's north half is primarily low ridges and gently rolling hills. Wide sand washes cut through the hills and plains. The southern portion of the WSA consists of a north-south tilted ridge made up of colorful folds. The ridge gives way to numerous steeply rugged perpendicular drainages and canyons. Vegetation consists of low desert shrub, yucca and small areas of pinyon pine and juniper on the higher elevations.

### WILDERNESS VALUES

#### Naturalness

The unit is primarily natural. Those man-made features which do occur within the unit do not significantly impact the area's naturalness.

Several ways pass through the WSA. A two mile way runs through Immigrant Canyon from the Garden Springs Road to the Devils Cove Road. A second way extends from the north side of Garden Springs Road along the wash's ridge line, approximately 1.2 miles. A third way, about 1/2 mile long comes into the WSA from the southwest, and a fourth extends from Devils Cove Road into New Spring Wash to a developed spring. The fifth way extends from the northern boundary.

Two short fencelines are located with the WSA for a total of 1.8 miles in the northeast corner and the southwest. There are two developed springs in the WSA located at New Spring in the southwest corner and Jules Spring northwest of Azure Ridge.

#### Solitude

The WSA offers at least 9,500 acres of outstanding opportunities for solitude. These opportunities are essentially offered by abundant rock outcrops along Azure Ridge and Million Hills, a broken chain of small low-lying hills separated from Azure Ridge by a draw. Combined vegetative cover of the mountain brush community and desert community species, the numerous drainages and canyons provide essential features to enhance solitude opportunities. The most preferable and accessible areas to a visitor in the WSA would be Immigrant Canyon, Azure Ridge, Million Hills, Garden Spring Canyon and New Spring Wash.

#### Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Recreational opportunities for Million Hills are good to excellent. There are fantastic scenic vistas, secluded spots and unusual geologic features that would entice visitors for hiking, photography, nature study or backpacking. These opportunities are available in two distinct desert atmosphere. The northern portion provides low desert environment with marginal desert landscape. The southern portion offers excellent opportunities in a mid-elevation mountain brush environment. The units accessibility is an added plus for hiking to such destinations as Immigrant Canyon, Garden Spring Canyon, New Spring Wash and Azure Ridge. These destinations also provide viewing of wildlife and scenic vistas for photography and nature study. Several backpacking routes are also available. Primitive recreational use is estimated to be 50 visits annually.

#### Supplemental Values

This area offers excellent raptor nesting sites, few of these are available within the Las Vegas District. A large population of burros are found in the WSA. They concentrate here because of the gentle sloping landscape and the proximity to Lake Mead for water.

The desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) occurs within the WSA and was emergency listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in August 1989.

#### **MINERAL RESOURCES**

There are four lode claims found in the southern half of the WSA, above and to the west of Azure Ridge (Map 3-21). The Azure Mine, located roughly in the middle of the unit, was mined for zinc and copper at the turn of the century. This is the only reported occurrence of mineralized location in the WSA. There is moderate favorability for the occurrence of base metals around Azure Mine, but not in economic quantities (GEM, 1983) (Map 3-22).

The WSA also contains abundant limestone and dolomite of unknown quality. There appears to be abundant gravel resources near the paleozoic outcrops in the south half of the WSA.

#### **ENERGY RESOURCES**

There are five oil and gas leases still in effect within the WSA, no wells have been drilled in the WSA to date. Despite favorable reservoir rocks for host hydrocarbons, structure and stratigraphy is described as unfavorable for accumulation. However, exploratory wells have been drilled in areas just west of the WSA.

#### **RECREATION VALUES**

There are no developed recreation sites within the WSA. Motorized recreational use within the WSA occurs along the boundaries, washes and established trails. The majority of this use comes from hunters, rockhounds, and occasional recreational prospectors. This use accounts for 150 visits annually in the WSA. The area is designated for "limited use" under the off-road vehicle management plan and designation as specified in the Clark County Management Framework Plan (MFP).

Primitive recreation use such as hiking, backpacking, hunting and sightseeing, occur within the WSA. Access is provided by well maintained roads and ways. About 50 visits annually are attributed to primitive recreation.

#### **LIVESTOCK GRAZING**

There are two grazing allotments which fall partially into the Million Hills WSA. About seven percent of the Gold Butte allotment is contained within the WSA. This portion of the allotment located within the WSA utilizes an estimated 191 AUMs for cattle and 188 AUMs for wild burros. The Azure Ridge allotment is part of a larger area managed by the Arizona BLM. This area is managed under an allotment management plan (AMP). There are two existing fencelines and two developed springs within the WSA. An eight mile fence line is proposed for the eastern portion of the WSA.

A Range Allotment Evaluation was completed for the Gold Butte Allotment (encompassing the Million Hills WSA) in 1988. An Allotment Management Plan (AMP) for the area is scheduled for completion in 1990.

#### **WILDLIFE RESOURCES**

As bighorn sheep were historically present in this range, the species has been targeted for reintroduction by the Nevada Department of Fish and Wildlife. A 1983 Site Release Plan identified the Million Hills WSA as a potential release site for bighorn sheep. Two water developments are planned within the WSA to support the reintroduction of the sheep. A combined wildlife Habitat Management Plan (HMP) which will include desert tortoise and bighorn sheep is planned for the Gold Butte area.

The desert tortoise was emergency listed as an endangered species in August 1989. In November 1988 a four State (Nevada, Utah, California, and Arizona) rangewide habitat plan ("Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On The Public Lands: A Rangewide Plan") was adopted by the BLM. (See Appendix A). This Rangewide Plan provides objectives and management actions to be used by the Bureau to improve the status of the tortoise on public lands. Preliminary categorization of tortoise habitat in accordance with the rangewide plan and the subsequent endangered species listing has identified both Category I and



uncategorized desert tortoise habitat in the Million Hills WSA (Map 3-23). The northern-most portion of the WSA (about 8,960 acres) is Category I habitat.

Other wildlife include raptors, wild horses and burros, and upland game birds.

#### **LANDS AND REALTY**

No private lands exist within the WSA. No realty actions are proposed or are planned to occur within the study area.

The Million Hills WSA is contiguous along its eastern boundary to the National Park Service Lake Mead National Recreation Area (NRA). The NRA Final Environmental Impact Statement - General Management Plan released in July 1986 identified these lands as meeting the criteria of the Wilderness Act of 1964. The Management Zoning areas identified in the General Management Plan places these lands within the Resource Utilization Subzone (mineral leasing permitted in this subzone). A wilderness plan will be prepared for the NRA following completion of the General Management Plan.

#### **THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES**

The desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) was emergency listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in August 1989 (See Wildlife Resources).

#### **CULTURAL RESOURCES**

There are no cultural sites reported in the WSA. No surveys have been conducted in the WSA.

#### **WATER SOURCES**

There are two perennial springs and one intermittent spring found in the WSA. Julie's Spring (perennial) and New Spring (Intermittent) have been developed. All of these springs are found in the southern portion of the WSA.

## **GARRETT BUTTES WSA (NV-050-235)**

### **GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS**

The Garrett Buttes WSA (Map 3-24) encompasses 11,835 acres of public land. Located east of the Overton Arm section of Lake Mead and southwest of Gold Butte, the unit is contiguous to the National Park Service Lake Mead National Recreation Area on the west, the Catclaw Road on the northern boundary and Scanlon Ferry Road on the eastern boundary. The southern boundary is the Lakeside Mine Road and the Bureau of Reclamation land withdrawal. The WSA is in a block configuration, roughly five miles wide by five miles long.

Topography consists of gently sloping outwash plain on the west, two rounded buttes to the east, and a small ridge running the length of the southern boundary. Elevations range from 1,195 to 3,920 feet. Vegetation is sparse, low desert shrub typical of the southern Mojave type, providing marginal vegetative screening.

### **WILDERNESS VALUES**

#### **Naturalness**

The WSA provides its most pristine features in the central portion of the unit. It is here that very few man-made intrusions exist. There is a total of 4.9 miles of ways which pass through the WSA. The longest (2.4 miles) extends from the northern boundary into the center of the unit. Other short intrusions follow washes, and one comes into the unit from the eastern boundary. Other man-made features include five developed seeps and springs and seven upland game bird drinkers scattered throughout the WSA.

#### **Solitude**

The WSA provides outstanding opportunities for solitude in the short, narrow twisting canyon at the eastern end of Spring Wash, the best area for natural screening and seclusion. The unit is of sufficient size that outstanding opportunities for solitude exist within its center. At this point, the unit's boundaries would be at equal distance.

The sparse, low desert shrub on the outwash plain to the west provides only marginal screening.

#### **Primitive and Unconfined Recreation**

Recreation opportunities in the Garrett Buttes WSA are limited. Opportunities for hiking, hunting, horseback riding and backpacking are available, however, there are few special features or attractive landscapes to draw a visitor. Extreme climatic conditions and lack of screening throughout the unit limits use of the area to fall through spring.

Hunting for upland game birds (Gambel's quail) is best along the boundary roads, as is the horseback riding. The most interesting day hike the unit has to offer is through Spring Wash Canyon. This canyon provides colorful and interesting rock formations.

#### **Supplemental Values**

There is a herd of wild burros which migrate through the WSA. They normally frequent the western portion where they are close to water. The presence of these animals adds a wild, scenic feature to the WSA.

The desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*), emergency listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in August 1989, has been identified within the WSA.

### **MINERAL RESOURCES**

There have been no claims filed within the WSA (Map 3-25). The Garrett Buttes WSA has low favorability for occurrence of mineral resources over about half of the area, the remainder has moderate potential (Map 3-26). Although the east half has Precambrian metamorphics and intrusive in bedrock which has been identified as host rock for precious metals in other parts of the Gold Butte area, there is no known occurrence of metallics or non-metallics in the WSA (GEM, 1983). There would appear to be abundant

gravel reserves in the WSA, however no development of these resources has occurred. It is unlikely they will be developed as the area is far from a marketable source.

#### **ENERGY RESOURCES**

The WSA is considered to have low favorability for the occurrence of energy resources (GEM, 1983). Presently, no oil and gas leases exist within the WSA.

#### **RECREATION VALUES**

There are no developed recreation sites within the WSA. Motorized recreational use within the WSA occurs along the boundaries, washes and established trails. The majority of this use comes from hunters and cross-country trail riders. This use accounts for 180 visits annually in the WSA. The area is designated for "limited use" under the off-road vehicle management plan and designation as specified in the Clark County Management Framework Plan (MFP).

Non-motorized types of recreational activities occurring within the WSA include upland game bird hunting, hiking and horseback riding. This type of use accounts for an estimated 50 visits annually.

#### **LIVESTOCK GRAZING**

The Garrett Buttes WSA contains about seven percent of the Gold Butte Allotment. The portion of the Gold Butte Allotment located within the WSA utilizes an estimated 191 AUMs for cattle and an estimated 188 AUMs for burros. Range improvements within the WSA include five developed springs or seeps. These provide water for livestock and wildlife. Only one spring (Gann Spring) in the southeast corner has been developed with a pipeline and trough.

A Range Allotment Evaluation was completed for the Gold Butte Allotment (encompassing the Garrett Butte WSA) in 1988. An Allotment Management Plan (AMP) for the area is scheduled for completion in 1990.

#### **WILDLIFE RESOURCES**

The WSA contains excellent habitat for Gambel's quail, an upland game bird. Seven bird guzzlers to support the quail populations have been installed in the WSA.

The desert tortoise was emergency listed as an endangered species in August 1989. While it is likely that desert tortoise occur in the area, preliminary categorization of tortoise habitat in the WSA has not identified any Category I, II or III desert tortoise habitat in the Garrett Buttes WSA (Map 3-27). Since Category I habitat exists north of this WSA, it is possible that future population studies will require the categorization of habitat in this WSA also.

#### **LANDS AND REALTY**

No private lands exist within the WSA. No realty actions are planned or proposed to occur within the study area.

The Garrett Butte WSA is contiguous along its western boundary to the National Park Service Lake Mead National Recreation Area (NRA). The NRA Final Environmental Impact Statement - General Management Plan released in July 1986 identified these lands as meeting the criteria of the Wilderness Act of 1964. The Management Zoning areas identified in the General Management Plan places these lands within the Environmental Protection and Natural Environment Subzones. A wilderness plan will be prepared for the NRA following completion of the General Management Plan.

#### **THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES (SEE WILDLIFE RESOURCES)**

The desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) was emergency listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in August 1989 (See Wildlife Resources).

#### **CULTURAL RESOURCES**

No cultural surveys have been conducted in the WSA and no sites have been recorded.

#### **WATER SOURCES**

There are four Intermittent springs and one perennial spring in the WSA which have been developed for use by livestock and wildlife. There are no other waters in the WSA.

## QUAIL SPRINGS WSA (NV-050-411)

### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

The Quail Springs WSA (map 3-28) is located along the southern boundary of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Desert National Wildlife Range. It contains 12,145 acres of public lands. The WSA is bounded on the west by an access road for the USFWS Headquarters, and on the southwest by a powerline right-of-way. The southern boundary is determined by private land ownership patterns for the city of Las Vegas.

The topography of the unit is primarily flat with gentle sloping bajadas on the southern end. A major wash runs through the southern part of the WSA. There are no major geologic formations in the unit, and vegetation consists primarily of low desert shrubs and grasses.

### WILDERNESS VALUES

#### Naturalness

The WSA is primarily in a natural condition. The north-central portion of the WSA is the most natural, north of the wash. There are no existing range improvements or wildlife developments within the WSA.

There are 9.3 miles of ways which pass through the WSA, the longest is 3.8 miles and crosses the north half of the unit. Two other ways, each 2 miles long, cross the northern and southern ends of the unit. Other ways totaling 1.5 miles extend into the WSA from the western boundary. The large sand wash in the southeastern portion of the WSA provides an ideal area for ORV use. This area is criss-crossed with tracks from motorcycles and dune buggies.

#### Solitude

The WSA's vegetation and topography provide only minimal screening, however, the study area's size provides limited outstanding opportunities for solitude. These opportunities would occur in the central portion of the WSA, away from the boundaries and ways which cross the unit in the south and north.

#### Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Recreational opportunities for the Quail Springs WSA are best for horseback riding. The gently sloping terrain provides for easy walking. The lack of diversity in the landscape and lack of points of interest or destination does not offer a high quality experience. It is more likely that the unit is most often used as access to the Desert National Wildlife Range, which offers better recreational opportunities. Primitive recreational use is estimated to be 30 visits annually.

#### Supplemental Values

The desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) was emergency listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in August 1989. Two paleontological sites have been recorded near the WSA boundary, however, these are not considered potentially eligible for the National Register.

### MINERAL RESOURCES

The entire Quail Springs WSA is composed of Quaternary alluvium, and is not considered favorable for the location of metallic minerals. There are no known locatable minerals within the study area, although there are a total of 13 placer claims located in the southwestern portion of the WSA (Map 3-29 and 3-30). There has been no development of these claims in the past and none is expected in the near future.

The entire WSA has been classified as moderate for the occurrence of sand and gravel resources (GEM, 1983). Currently, there are no permits for salable minerals within the WSA and none are targeted for the area.

### ENERGY RESOURCES

The WSA has been classified as low for the occurrence of oil and gas and moderate for geothermal resources (GEM, 1983). There are no oil and gas leases within the WSA.

### RECREATION VALUES

There are no developed recreation sites within the WSA. Motorized recreational use within the WSA occurs along the boundaries, washes and established trails. The majority of this use comes from dirt bikers and cross-country trail riders. This use accounts for 150 visits annually in the WSA. The area is designated for "limited use" under the off-road vehicle management plan and designation as specified in the Clark County Management Framework Plan (MFP).

Non-motorized types of recreation, such as hiking and horseback riding do occur within the WSA, usually by private landowners who live close to the area. This use accounts for an estimated 30 visits annually.

### LIVESTOCK GRAZING

There is one allotment (Indian Springs) of which about 40 percent lies within the WSA. This allotment has been withdrawn from ephemeral grazing during the past five years and new applications for ephemeral use is not projected. There are no existing range improvements within the WSA are none are planned.

### WILDLIFE RESOURCES

The desert tortoise was emergency listed as an endangered species in August 1989. In November 1988 a four State (Nevada, Utah, California, and Arizona) rangewide habitat plan ("Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On The Public Lands: A Rangewide Plan") was adopted by the BLM. (See Appendix A). This Rangewide Plan provides objectives and management actions to be used by the Bureau to improve the status of the tortoise on public lands. Preliminary categorization of tortoise habitat in accordance with the rangewide plan and the subsequent endangered species listing has identified the entire WSA (about 12,145 acres) as Category II desert tortoise habitat (Map 3-31).

There are no existing or proposed wildlife habitat developments for this WSA.

### LANDS AND REALTY

No private lands exist within the WSA. An existing powerline right-of-way is the study area's southern boundary. The Western Regional Corridor Study completed for Nevada in 1986 has identified a good portion of the study area for a possible utility corridor. The Department of Energy has identified lands within the WSA as a possible route for a proposed transportation corridor for a railroad line.

The northern boundary of the WSA is contiguous to the Fish and Wildlife Service Desert National Game Range proposed wilderness Unit I - Gas Peak (Desert Wilderness Proposal Desert National Wildlife Range - October 1971).

### THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

The desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) was emergency listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in August 1989 (See Wildlife Resources).

### CULTURAL RESOURCES

Two paleontological sites have been recorded on the southern boundary. Neither one are considered potentially eligible for the National Register.

### WATER SOURCES

No water sources have been identified within the study area.



## **EL DORADO WSA (NV-050-423)**

### **GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS**

The Eldorado WSA (Map 3-32) lies in the southeastern portion of Clark County, Nevada, approximately one hour's drive from Las Vegas, Nevada. The study area contains 12,290 acres of public land, surrounding 120 acres of private land, in a roughly rectangular configuration 5 miles long and 4 miles wide. The WSA is bordered by the El Dorado Act Lands to the north, Nevada State Highway 60 to the west, the Lake Mead National Recreation Area on the east and the mining town of Nelson to the south. The WSA encloses rugged mountainous terrain of volcanic and metamorphic rocks along the western edge of the Eldorado Mountains. A prominent north-south ridgeline, cut by numerous wide washes and canyons, dominates the landscape. Desert shrubs and cacti cover the foothills, while small pockets of mountain brush species (scrub oak) and stands of cholla occur in the canyons. Elevations range from 2,000 feet on the eastern side of the WSA to 3,800 feet at the top of Nelson Peak. Access to the WSA is provided by dirt roads and by Nevada State Route 60, a paved route that forms a portion of the western boundary.

### **WILDERNESS VALUES**

#### **Naturalness**

The majority of the El Dorado WSA is in extremely natural condition. The rugged topography of the area has limited development attempts by man. In an area of over 12,000 acres, man-made intrusions include vehicle tracks along the wide sandy washes of the western WSA, one developed spring and three short ways, totaling less than 1 mile each. These features are primarily visible within their immediate area, leaving approximately 95 percent of the study area unaffected by man and his works.

Several man-made features create external imprints on the WSA. State Route 60 is adjacent to much of the western edge of the study area and forms a portion of the southern boundary. The communities of Boulder City, 13 miles to the north, and Nelson, located at the southwestern corner of the WSA, are visible from high points along the western boundary. Several powerlines run across El Dorado Valley, approximately 3.5 miles northwest of the WSA. Mining activities continue along the southern boundary of the study area. These external imprints are visible from higher elevations within the WSA.

#### **Solitude**

The mountainous core of the El Dorado WSA insures outstanding opportunities for solitude. The central and eastern portions of the WSA consist of rugged peaks and ridges, cut by wide washes, canyons and narrow drainages. Oak Creek and Lonesome Canyons, two long canyons filled with scrub oak, contain numerous secluded spots.

The northwest and western sections of the WSA are characterized by a gently sloping bajada, crisscrossed by numerous drainages and washes. Topographic features offer limited screening and few secluded areas.

Vegetative screening varies throughout the WSA. Major canyons and drainages support mountain brush communities of scrub oak and acacia. Low-growing desert shrubs and cacti dot the sloping bajada of the northwestern portions of the WSA.

Opportunities for a visitor to find a secluded spot are dependent on topographic and vegetative screening. Approximately 50 percent of the WSA consists of narrow drainages and wide canyons with pockets of dense vegetation that create outstanding opportunities for solitude. The gentle bajada of the northwestern region, with its sparse vegetative cover, permits an open view of external features and activities; limited opportunities for solitude would be available within this area.

#### **Primitive and Unconfined Recreation**

Recreational opportunities in the El Dorado WSA are very good and quite varied. Most primitive recreational use would be concentrated in the mountainous region of the study area where major canyons and drainages provide interesting features, seclusion and varying degrees of challenge. A powerline road and State Route 60 permit year-round access to the north, south and west boundaries of the WSA.

Backpacking, horseback riding and camping opportunities are considered outstanding in 50 percent of the WSA. Several routes north through the unit would permit scenic hikes of more than one day's duration. Excellent camping sites are available in Oak Creek Canyon, with topographic and vegetative screening contributing to the wilderness experience.

Wildlife related recreational activities such as nature studies, photography and hunting are available in the WSA. Desert wildlife, including desert tortoise, bighorn sheep and wild burros, can be seen in the study area. Colorful landscapes, diverse geologic formations and scenic vistas provide excellent subject matter for photography. Populations of bighorn sheep and Gambel's quail make the WSA attractive to hunters.

#### **Supplemental Values**

The El Dorado WSA contains several supplemental values. Unique geologic features enhance the scenic qualities of the study area. Colorful tuff formations, basalt flows and a natural bridge, Gregory's Arch, contribute to the aesthetic experience within the WSA.

The desert tortoise (Gopherus agassizii) was emergency listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in August 1989 (See Wildlife Resources). Ecologically, the area supports populations of Gambel's quail, bighorn sheep and wild burros. Two sensitive species (Penstemon bicolor ssp. bicolor and Penstemon bicolor ssp. roseus) have been identified in the study area. These two penstemons are currently listed in the "Federal Threatened and Endangered Plant Register" as a Category 2 (Watch) listing.

#### **MINERAL RESOURCES**

The El Dorado WSA forms the western edge of the El Dorado Range. Precambrian gneiss, schist and granite have been locally intruded by Lower Tertiary granitic masses. Predominant rock types come from Mid-Tertiary volcanics, ranging in composition from rhyolite to basalt.

The WSA lies within the El Dorado Mining District. Activity in the area to the south of the WSA was actively mined in the late 1800's up to 1942. Significant amounts of gold, silver, and copper were produced within the mining district. Currently 24 mining claims are located within the WSA (Map 3-33). No development has taken place to date on these claims.

The entire El Dorado WSA is classified as having low favorability for metallic and non-metallic minerals and moderate favorability for the occurrence of uranium (GEM, 1983) (Map 3-34). There are no known deposits of these resources in the study area. The entire WSA has a low favorability for the occurrence of sand and gravel (GEM, 1983). No material sites occur within the study area at present.

#### **ENERGY RESOURCES**

No known oil and gas or geothermal deposits occur within the WSA. Presently no oil and gas leases exist within the WSA. (See Mineral Favorability Map).

#### **RECREATION VALUES**

Traditional forms of primitive types of recreation such as hiking, sightseeing, camping and hunting occur within the WSA. This use is estimated to be 70 visits annually.

The wide washes and sloping bajada are conducive to motorized vehicle related activities including off-road driving, dirt biking, racing and access for hunting and rockhounding. Current motorized recreational use within the WSA is estimated to be 550 visits annually. The area is designated for "limited use" under the off-road vehicle management plan and designation as specified in the Clark County Management Framework Plan (MFP). Restrictions and limits apply to competitive events under this "limited use" designation.

There are currently no developed recreation facilities within or adjacent to the WSA. The Clark County Management Framework Plan (MFP) has proposed the installation of interpretative signs and access trail within the WSA as part of an interpretative program for Gregory's Arch.

## LIVESTOCK GRAZING

The El Dorado WSA lies within one grazing allotment, the Itebea Peaks Allotment (ephemeral). Approximately three percent of the Itebea Peaks Allotment is located within the WSA. The portion of the Itebea Peaks Allotment located within the WSA has an estimated use of 55 AUMs for cattle, 25 AUMs for burros and 9 AUMs for bighorn sheep and desert tortoise.

The WSA lies within the El Dorado Herd Use Area for wild horses and burros. No Herd Area Management Plan (HAMP) is scheduled for the El Dorado Herd Area.

Existing range improvements within the WSA consist of one developed spring. No new range projects are proposed for development within the WSA.

## WILDLIFE RESOURCES

The El Dorado WSA provides approximately 9,500 acres of bighorn sheep habitat. The study area lies within the El Dorado Bighorn Sheep Habitat Area and the El Dorado Herd Use Area for wild burros. Herd sizes are estimated to be 154 bighorn sheep and 139 burros for the area.

The desert tortoise was emergency listed as an endangered species in August 1989. In November 1988 a four State (Nevada, Utah, California, and Arizona) rangewide habitat plan ("Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On The Public Lands: A Rangewide Plan") was adopted by the BLM. (See Appendix A). This Rangewide Plan provides objectives and management actions to be used by the Bureau to improve the status of the tortoise on public lands. Preliminary categorization of tortoise habitat in accordance with the rangewide plan and the subsequent endangered species listing has identified about 2,700 acres in the extreme western portion of the WSA as Category III desert tortoise habitat (Map 3-35).

The vegetation of the washes and canyons provide cover for populations of Gambel's quail. Small desert mammals, song birds and bobcats are also present in the WSA.

## LANDS AND REALTY

The WSA surrounds a 120 acre undeveloped patent mining claim which lies along the study area's eastern boundary. Present access requires cross country travel across a small portion of the WSA. Exercising of the rights of access to the patented parcel could include motorized types of transportation.

The Western Utility group and other utility companies have proposed the designation of an above and below ground utility corridor (in "Western Regional Corridor Study", 1986) that would cross the southern portion of the WSA.

The northern boundary of the WSA is contiguous to the El Dorado Valley Act (P.L. -85-339 1958) lands. These lands were set aside by special federal legislation to allow the State of Nevada an option for purchase. The Eldorado Act Lands will most likely be intensively developed.

The El Dorado WSA is contiguous along its eastern boundary to the National Park Service Lake Mead National Recreation Area (NRA). The NRA Final Environmental Impact Statement - General Management Plan released in July 1986 identified these lands as meeting the criteria of the Wilderness Act of 1964. The Management Zoning areas identified in the General Management Plan places these lands within the Environmental Protection Subzone and the Resource Utilization Subzone (mineral leasing permitted). A wilderness plan will be prepared for the NRA following completion of the General Management Plan.

## THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES (SEE WILDLIFE RESOURCES)

Two sensitive species (Penstemon bicolor ssp. bicolor and Penstemon bicolor ssp. roseus) have been identified in the study area. These two penstemons are currently listed in the "Federal Threatened and Endangered Plant Register" as a Category 2 (Watch) listing. The two varieties of penstemon have been identified within the extreme southwest corner of the WSA.

#### **CULTURAL RESOURCES**

The entire El Dorado WSA is considered to be of moderate sensitivity for cultural resources. One formal cultural resource inventory has been conducted within the study area; no sites were recorded as a result of this activity.

#### **WATER SOURCES**

Two water sources have been identified within the El Dorado WSA. These include an Intermittent seep and one intermittent developed spring, Bridge Spring, located in the southwestern portion of the WSA.



## IRETEBA PEAKS WSA (NV-050-438)

### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

The Iretaba Peaks WSA (Map 3-36) is located south of Nelson in Clark County, Nevada, approximately one hour's drive from Las Vegas, Nevada. The study area contains 14,994 acres of public land in a rectangular configuration 7.5 miles long by 3.5 miles wide. The WSA encloses a major north-south knife edge ridge of igneous and metamorphic formations. Deeply incised rocky draws angle out from the ridgeline to the east. To the south, the landscape flattens into a bajada that drains into Lake Mead. Elevations within the study area range from 2000 feet on the eastern boundary to the 5,060 foot Iretaba Peak. Vegetation is sparsely scattered throughout the area and consists of low-growing desert shrubs at the lower elevations and a handful of pinyon/juniper at the top of the range. Access to the WSA is provided by several dirt roads and a powerline road located to the north of the study area.

### WILDERNESS VALUES

#### Naturalness

The majority of the Iretaba Peaks WSA is in extremely natural condition. In an area of nearly 15,000 acres, the only man-made intrusion within the study area is a short way less than one-half mile in length. This feature is primarily visible from within its immediate vicinity.

Several major unnatural influences are located outside of the WSA. Two powerlines, the Rockefeller and St. Louis Mines, U.S. Highway 95 and numerous dirt roads are visible from the north-south trending ridgeline and higher points within the study area. Topographic screening lessens the effects of these external imprints; 75 percent of the WSA remains unaffected by these unnatural features.

#### Solitude

The size (14,994 acres) and rectangular configuration of the Iretaba Peaks WSA are adequate to provide outstanding opportunities for solitude within a limited portion of the WSA. The mountainous terrain of the central core of the study area (approximately 85 percent) creates secluded areas. Rugged peaks and serrated ridges, cut by wide washes and steep drainages, aid in screening visitors from man-made features and activities occurring along the boundaries of the WSA.

The extreme northern, southern and western regions of the WSA afford less than outstanding opportunities for solitude. Landforms include wide, shallow drainages and a gently sloping bajada that offers limited topographic screening from the sights and sounds of activities outside the WSA.

Vegetative screening within the WSA is generally limited. Low-growing desert shrubs, i.e. creosote, blackbrush, cacti and yucca, are sparsely distributed over the landscape. Small stands of pinyon/juniper that are found at higher elevations are not sufficient to visually screen outside intrusions.

#### Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Recreational opportunities in the Iretaba Peaks WSA are varied but are not considered to be outstanding. Most recreational use would be concentrated along the major ridgelines and atop the higher peaks. Access by dirt roads from the north and southwestern boundaries would be available year-round.

Hiking and backpacking opportunities are limited within the study area. The most appealing destinations for day hikes would be the peaks and ridgelines that afford scenic views of Lake Mead. Backpackers could follow a route across the WSA into the Lake Mead Recreation Area, bordering the east side of the WSA. These activities would best be enjoyed through the months of September to May.

Wildlife-related recreational activities such as birdwatching, nature studies, photography and hunting are possible within the study area. The WSA provides habitat for bighorn sheep, mountain lions, bobcats, small desert mammals, Gambel's quail and desert tortoise. Herds of wild burros can also be observed within the area. Photographic subject matter would include the above mentioned wildlife as well as scenic views of Lake Mead from atop the higher peaks and ridgelines within the WSA.



### **Supplemental Values**

The Ireteba Peaks WSA contains several supplemental scientific and educational values. The desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) emergency listed as an endangered species in August 1989 occurs in the WSA. Two sensitive species (*Penstemon bicolor* ssp. *bicolor* and *Penstemon bicolor* ssp. *roseus*) have been identified in the study area. These two penstemons are currently listed in the "Federal Threatened and Endangered Plant Register" as a Category 2 (Watch) listing. Herds of bighorn sheep and wild burros can also be observed within the WSA.

### **MINERAL RESOURCES**

The Ireteba Peaks Range is composed of Precambrian gneiss, schist and granite which have been locally intruded by Lower Tertiary granitic masses. Predominant rock types come from Mid-Tertiary volcanics and range in composition from rhyolite to basalt. The range has been uplifted and complexly faulted into several blocks. Nineteen mining claims are located within the WSA; to date, no development of these claims has taken place (Map 3-37).

Approximately six percent (900 acres) of the WSA is considered to have moderate favorability for the occurrence of metallic minerals; the remaining portion is considered to have low favorability (Map 3-38). The entire study area is considered to have low favorability for the occurrence of non-metallic minerals and moderate favorability for the occurrence of uranium (GEM, 1983).

The entire WSA has a low favorability for the occurrence of sand and gravel deposits (GEM, 1983). Currently, no material sites exist within the WSA and no development is projected for the area.

### **ENERGY RESOURCES**

The Ireteba Peaks WSA is considered to have low favorability for the occurrence of oil and gas and geothermal resources (GEM, 1983). There are no existing or pending oil, gas or geothermal leases in the WSA.

### **RECREATION VALUES**

There are no developed recreation sites within or adjacent to the WSA. Motorized recreational use within the WSA occurs primarily along the northern boundary and within the southern bajada. The majority of this use comes from hunters and cross-country riders. This use accounts for 65 visits annually in the WSA. The area is designated for "limited use" under the off-road vehicle management plan and designation as specified in the Clark County Management Framework Plan (MFP). Restrictions and limits apply to competitive events under this "limited use" designation.

Non-motorized types of recreation such as hiking, and hunting occur within the WSA. Most of this use is projected to come from bighorn sheep hunting. Access is provided by well maintained roads and ways. About 50 visits annually are attributed to non-motorized types of recreation.

### **LIVESTOCK GRAZING**

The Ireteba Peaks WSA lies entirely within one grazing allotment, the Ireteba Peaks Allotment (ephemeral). Approximately four percent of the Ireteba Peaks Allotment is located within the WSA. The portion of the Ireteba Peaks Allotment located within the WSA has an estimated use of 74 AUMs for cattle, 33 AUMs for burros and 13 AUMs for bighorn sheep and desert tortoise.

The WSA lies within the El Dorado Herd Use Area for wild horses and burros. Current populations are estimated to be 139 burros within the area. No Herd Area Management Plan (HAMP) is scheduled for the El Dorado Herd Area.

No range improvements exist within the WSA. Two springs are proposed for development within the area's northeast portion.



## **WILDLIFE RESOURCES**

The Ireteba Peaks WSA lies within the El Dorado Bighorn Sheep Habitat Area and provides approximately 13,500 acres of bighorn sheep habitat. Current populations are estimated to be 19 sheep within the area.

The desert tortoise was emergency listed as an endangered species in August 1989. In November 1988 a four State (Nevada, Utah, California, and Arizona) rangewide habitat plan ("Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On The Public Lands: A Rangewide Plan") was adopted by the BLM. (See Appendix A). This Rangewide Plan provides objectives and management actions to be used by the Bureau to improve the status of the tortoise on public lands. Preliminary categorization of tortoise habitat in accordance with the rangewide plan and the subsequent endangered species listing has identified about 1,800 acres in the extreme southern portion of the WSA as Category II desert tortoise habitat (Map 3-39).

The study area also supports Gambel's quail, mountain lion and bobcats. There are no existing or proposed wildlife habitat developments within the WSA.

## **LANDS AND REALTY**

There are no parcels of private land located within the Ireteba Peaks WSA. Southern California Edison Company has identified the need for an additional 500 kv transmission line crossing the northern portion of the study area.

The Ireteba Peaks WSA is contiguous along its eastern boundary to the National Park Service Lake Mead National Recreation Area (NRA). The NRA final Environmental Impact Statement - General Management Plan released in July 1986 identified these lands as meeting the criteria of the Wilderness Act of 1964. The Management Zoning areas identified in the General Management Plan places these lands within the Resource Utilization Subzone (mineral leasing permitted) and the Environmental Protection Subzone. A wilderness plan will be prepared for the NRA following completion of the General Management Plan.

## **THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES (SEE WILDLIFE RESOURCES)**

The desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) emergency listed as an endangered species in August 1989 occurs in the WSA. Two sensitive species (*Penstemon bicolor ssp. bicolor* and *Penstemon bicolor ssp. roseus*) have been identified in the study area. These two penstemons are currently listed in the "Federal Threatened and Endangered Plant Register" as a Category 2 (Watch) listing. The two varieties of penstemon have been identified within the western portion of the WSA along the ridgeline.

## **CULTURAL RESOURCES**

The entire Ireteba Peaks WSA is considered to be of moderate sensitivity for cultural resources. To date, no formal cultural inventories have been conducted within the WSA.

## **WATER SOURCES**

Five water sources have been identified within the Ireteba Peaks WSA. Two intermittent and two perennial springs and one seep are found within the study area. No developed waters exist within the WSA.

## **JUMBO SPRINGS WSA (NV-050-236)**

### **GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS**

The Jumbo Springs WSA (Map 3-40) encompasses 3,466 acres of public land. Located west of the Iceberg Canyon area and south of Gold Butte, Nevada the study area is contiguous to the National Park Service Lake Mead National Recreation Area on its southern and eastern borders. None of the area's boundaries run along roads. The WSA is in a rectangular configuration, roughly four miles long and 1.5 miles wide.

The WSA consists of the upper canyons of three major washes which drain from the edge of a plateau east toward Lake Mead. The canyons are rugged. Elevations range from 2,700 feet along the southeastern boundary to the 4,700-foot ridge on the northern end. Vegetation consists of low mountain brush species.

### **WILDERNESS VALUES**

#### **Naturalness**

The WSA is in a pristine condition with no man-made features. Outside imprints influencing the area are located outside of the northern boundary.

#### **Solitude**

There is no vegetative screening in the study area. The canyons do offer good topographic screening. They are subdivided into numerous tributary drainages with intervening ridges and rocky outcrops that provide limited locales for seclusion. Less than outstanding opportunities for solitude exist within the WSA.

#### **Primitive and Unconfined Recreation**

The WSA would provide hikers and backpackers with limited opportunities for hiking and backpacking. Visitors would be able to gain scenic views of Lake Mead and Iceberg Canyon. At best visitors would pass through the study area on their way to the Lake Mead Recreation Area.

#### **Supplemental Values**

The desert tortoise may occur within the WSA (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).

### **MINERAL RESOURCES**

No mining claims or known prospects or mines exist within the WSA. The WSA is composed of precambrian metamorphic rocks with outcroppings of the precambrian Gold Butte Granite. Gold can be found in quartz veins which intrude this bedrock. Therefore, prospecting for precious metals is projected to occur within the study area. The activity will be surface/outcrop sampling.

No significant deposits of sand and gravel exist within the WSA because of the mountainous terrain. No exploration or development of salable minerals has occurred, is occurring or is projected to occur within the WSA.

### **ENERGY RESOURCES**

The WSA is considered to have low favorability for the occurrence of energy resources (GEM, 1983) (Map 3-41). No oil and gas leases exist within the WSA, nor has there been any previous exploration activity. Exploration for or development of potential energy resources is not projected to occur.

### **RECREATION VALUES**

There are no developed recreation sites within the WSA. Approximately 8 visits of motorized recreational use are estimated to occur annually. Non-motorized recreational use, such as hiking or camping, within the WSA is considered to be extremely low.

### **LIVESTOCK GRAZING**

The Jumbo Springs WSA contains approximately two percent of the Gold Butte Allotment. The portion of the Gold Butte Allotment within the WSA utilizes an estimated 55 AUMs for cattle and 55 AUMs for burros. No range improvements exist within the WSA.

A Range Allotment Evaluation was completed for the Gold Butte Allotment (encompassing the Jumbo Springs WSA) in 1988. An Allotment Management Plan (AMP) for the area is scheduled for completion in 1990.

#### **WILDLIFE RESOURCES**

The Jumbo Springs WSA offers potential yearlong bighorn sheep habitat in this historical use area. Release of bighorn sheep within the WSA may require the implementation of one water development. A combined wildlife Habitat Management Plan (HMP) which will include key species of desert tortoise and bighorn sheep is planned for the Gold Butte area in 1988.

The desert tortoise was emergency listed as an endangered species in August 1989. While it is likely that desert tortoise occur in the area, preliminary categorization of tortoise habitat in the WSA has not identified any Category I, II or III desert tortoise habitat in the Jumbo Springs WSA (Map 3-42). Since Category I habitat exists north of this WSA, it is possible that future population studies will require the categorization of habitat in this WSA also.

#### **LANDS AND REALTY**

No private lands exist within the WSA. No realty actions are proposed.

The Jumbo Springs WSA is contiguous along its eastern boundary to the National Park Service Lake Mead National Recreation Area (NRA). The NRA final Environmental Impact Statement - General Management Plan released in July 1986 identified these lands as meeting the criteria of the Wilderness Act of 1964. The Management Zoning areas identified in the General Management Plan places these lands within the Natural Environment Subzone. A wilderness plan will be prepared for the NRA following completion of the General Management Plan.

#### **THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES**

No listed threatened or endangered species have been identified within the WSA.

#### **CULTURAL RESOURCES**

No cultural sites have been recorded within the WSA.

#### **WATER SOURCES**

No perennial or intermittent seeps or springs have been identified within the WSA.

## NELLIS ABC WSA (NV-050-04R-15)

### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

The Nellis ABC WSA (Map 3-43) is made-up of three small sub-areas separated by roads. Sub-area A contains 1,971 acres, B contains 2,713 and C contains 1,034 acres, for a combined total of 5,718 acres. The study area is located at the northern end of Vegas Valley. The southern and western borders are bound by private land; the east by a powerline road; the north by the Desert National Wildlife Range; and the northeast by the Sheep Mountain Gunnery Range.

The WSA consists of a flat bajada sloping gently south from the Sheep Range. It is highly eroded, creating a deeply rutted but uniform terrain. Vegetation consists of creosote and other desert shrubs, with some yucca appearing along the northern boundary.

### WILDERNESS VALUES

#### Naturalness

The WSA is in a natural condition, with the man-made features being separated from the study area. Vehicle tracks from off-road vehicle use are the primary intrusive features.

#### Solitude

The WSA on its own merit provides less than outstanding opportunities for solitude. The study area's low-growing vegetation and open landscape provides minimal screening for visitors and few secluded locales.

#### Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The study area's small size, irregular configuration and lack of variety and interesting features does not permit a visitor an outstanding opportunity for an unconfined primitive recreational experience. The area would provide limited opportunities for horseback riding and sightseeing.

#### Supplemental Values

The desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*), emergency listed as an endangered species in August 1989 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, has been identified within the WSA.

### MINERAL RESOURCES

Presently, there are no mining claims, prospects or mines located within the study area (Map 3-44). The WSA is composed entirely of alluvium deposits. Geologic conditions do not warrant accumulation of metallic, non-metallic or placer deposits. The entire WSA has been classified as moderate for the occurrence of sand and gravel resources (GEM, 1983) (Map 3-45). Currently, there are no permits for salable minerals within the WSA.

### ENERGY RESOURCES

The WSA has been classified as low for the occurrence of oil and gas and moderate for geothermal resources (GEM, 1983). One oil and gas lease currently exists within the WSA (Map 3-44).

### RECREATION VALUES

There are no developed recreation sites within the WSA. Motorized recreational use occurring within the area comes from dirt bikers and cross-country trail riders. This use accounts for 120 visits annually in the WSA. The area is designated for "limited use" under the off-road vehicle management plan and designation as specified in the Clark County Management Framework Plan (MFP). The ORV designation restricts high speed competitive events within the WSA.

Non-motorized types of recreation, such as horseback riding does occur within the WSA, usually by private landowners who live close to the area. This use accounts for an estimated 20 visits annually.

#### LIVESTOCK GRAZING

There is one allotment (Las Vegas Valley) of which about 10 percent lies within the WSA. This allotment has been withdrawn from ephemeral grazing during the past five years and new applications for ephemeral use is not projected. There are no existing range improvements within the WSA and none are planned.

#### WILDLIFE RESOURCES

In August 1989 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service emergency listed the desert tortoise as an endangered species. In November 1988 a four State (Nevada, Utah, California, and Arizona) rangewide habitat plan ("Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On The Public Lands: A Rangewide Plan") was adopted by the BLM. (See Appendix A). This Rangewide Plan provides objectives and management actions to be used by the Bureau to improve the status of the tortoise on public lands. Preliminary categorization of tortoise habitat in accordance with the rangewide plan and the subsequent endangered species listing has identified all of the Nellis ABC WSA as Category II desert tortoise habitat (Map 3-46).

There are no existing or proposed wildlife habitat developments for this WSA.

#### LANDS AND REALTY

No private lands exist within the WSA. The Western Regional Corridor Study completed for Nevada in 1986 has identified a good portion of the study area for a possible utility corridor. The Department of Energy has identified lands within the WSA as a possible route for a proposed transportation corridor for a rail line.

The northern boundary of the WSA is contiguous to the Fish and Wildlife Service Desert National Game Range proposed wilderness Unit I - Gas Peak (Desert Wilderness Proposal Desert National Wildlife Range - October 1971).

#### THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES (SEE WILDLIFE RESOURCES)

The desert tortoise (Gopherus agassizii), emergency listed as an endangered species in August 1989, has been identified within the WSA.

#### CULTURAL RESOURCES

The WSA does not possess cultural resources that are currently listed or proposed for nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. No cultural sites have been recorded within the WSA.

#### WATER SOURCES

No water sources have been identified within the study area.

## EVERGREEN ABC WSA (NV-050-01R-16)

### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

The Evergreen ABC (Map 3-47) WSA is made-up of three small sub-areas separated by private lands. Sub-area A encompasses 2,194 acres, B encompasses 289 and C comprises 211 acres, for a combined total of 2,694 acres. The study area is located south of Alamo, Nevada, sandwiched between the Desert National Wildlife Range and U.S. Highway 93. The western boundary is contiguous with the northeast end of the Desert National Wildlife Range boundary and the eastern boundary is made-up of a powerline right-of-way and dirt road.

The WSA consists primarily of a broad, easterly sloping bajada with numerous small draws and washes carving their way to the east from the study area's western border. Vegetation consists of low-growing desert shrubs, mainly creosote, saltbush, yucca, and scattered Joshua trees.

### WILDERNESS VALUES

#### Naturalness

The WSA is primarily in a natural condition, containing two small stock reservoirs within the northern portion of the WSA. The most prominent visible man-made features are located outside the WSA (highway, powerline, roads), along the area's eastern boundary.

#### Solitude

The WSA's extremely small size, low-growing vegetation and flat upward sloping topography provides the area with minimal screening and virtually no secluded spots available for experiencing solitude. The WSA on its own merit does not possess outstanding opportunities for solitude.

#### Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The area offers limited opportunities for horseback riding, hiking and nature study as the WSA's extremely small size limits movement. Few interesting locales and interesting features are located within the WSA that would draw visitors to the area to participate in primitive recreational experiences. At best the area would be used for access into the Desert National Wildlife Range.

#### Supplemental Values

Cultural resources such as shelter caves, lithic scatter and temporary campsites are found within the White River Drainage which, passes through portions of the WSA.

The desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*), emergency listed as an endangered species in August 1989 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, has been identified within the WSA.

### MINERAL RESOURCES

To date no mines, prospects or mining claims have been identified within the WSA (3-48). No known metallic or nonmetallic mineral deposits exist within the WSA as the geologic conditions are not favorable for the accumulation of these minerals. The exploration for any potential locatable minerals is not projected for the WSA.

The entire area has low favorability for the occurrence of salable minerals (GEM, 1983). Sand and gravel deposits may occur in the alluvial areas, but no commercial value is anticipated.

### ENERGY RESOURCES

The WSA is considered to have moderate favorability for the occurrence of oil and gas because of its position with respect to the Overthrust Belt and sedimentary basin concept (GEM, 1983) (Map 3-49). To date, no wells have been drilled nor has any geophysical exploration been conducted within the WSA. Exploration for or development of potential energy resources is not projected to occur within the WSA.



## RECREATION VALUES

There are no developed recreation sites within the WSA. Approximately 35 visits of motorized recreational use, such as dirt biking and off-road driving, are estimated to occur annually within the WSA. The area is designated for "limited use" under the off-road vehicle management plan and designation as specified in the Caliente Management Framework Plan (MFP).

Non-motorized recreation, such as horseback riding does occasionally occur within the WSA. This use account for an estimated 10 visits annually.

## LIVESTOCK GRAZING

The Evergreen WSA contains about four percent of the Lower Lake East Allotment and less than one percent of the Delamar Allotment. The portion of the Lower Lake East Allotment located within the WSA utilizes an estimated 26 AUMs for cattle and the Delamar Allotment an estimated 30 AUMs for cattle. Range improvements within the WSA include two small earthen reservoirs. These provide water for livestock and wildlife. No other range improvements exist within the WSA and none are proposed.

## WILDLIFE RESOURCES

In August 1989 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service emergency listed the desert tortoise as an endangered species. In November 1988 a four State (Nevada, Utah, California, and Arizona) rangewide habitat plan ("Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On The Public Lands: A Rangewide Plan") was adopted by the BLM. (See Appendix A). This Rangewide Plan provides objectives and management actions to be used by the Bureau to improve the status of the tortoise on public lands. Preliminary categorization of tortoise habitat in accordance with the rangewide plan and the subsequent endangered species listing has identified all of the Evergreen ABC WSA as Category I desert tortoise habitat (Map 3-50).

There are no existing wildlife habitat developments within the study area.

## LANDS AND REALTY

The Western Regional Corridor Study completed for Nevada in 1986 has identified a good portion of the unit for a possible utility corridor. The WSA contains one material site with right-of-way issued to the Nevada Department of Transportation. The right-of-way was issued prior to 1976 and may be utilized for perpetuity. Private land holdings separate the three parcels of the WSA.

The western boundary of the WSA is contiguous to the Fish and Wildlife Service Desert National Game Range proposed wilderness Unit III - Sheep Range (Desert Wilderness Proposal Desert National Wildlife Range - October 1971).

## THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES (SEE WILDLIFE RESOURCES)

The desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*), emergency listed as an endangered species in August 1989 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, has been identified within the WSA.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

The WSA does not possess cultural resources that are currently listed or proposed for nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Cultural resources, lithic scatters, shelter caves and campsites, have been recorded within the White River Drainage, which passes through the WSA.

## WATER SOURCES

No intermittent or perennial seeps and springs have been recorded within the WSA.

## LAHONTAN CUTTHROAT TROUT ISA

### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

The ISA is composed of the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Natural Area (Map 3-51). Located in the western portion of Humboldt County, approximately 78 miles northwest of Winnemucca, it was established as a natural area in 1973 and encompasses 12,316 acres of land. The major objective of the Natural Area is to ensure the preservation of the Lahontan cutthroat trout, a threatened species of fish, in its natural habitat and to maximize available spawning areas. Natural features of the area consist of scattered stands of aspen and mountain mahogany, mountains and creeks. Elevation ranges from a low of 6,120 feet on the west boundary to a high of 8,799 feet located on an unnamed mountain near the northeast corner. Access to the ISA is possible from the north, east or west, although the western access road is usually extremely rough and is seldom used. There are 22 miles of cherrystemmed road and six separate parcels of private lands totaling 1,256 acres (10 percent of the ISA) within the ISA. There are no State lands within the ISA.

### WILDERNESS VALUES

#### Naturalness

The Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Natural Area ISA has been subdivided into 12 individual units by the 22 miles of cherrystemmed roads which run through the area. Each of these subunits contains less than 5,000 acres. Because of its natural area significance, it has been evaluated for wilderness.

The Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Natural Area is an outstandingly beautiful area with its running water, large stands of quaking aspen, willow and mahogany tree, lush meadows, colorful rock formations and good populations of wildlife. While some small portions of the ISA are in a natural condition, there are numerous intrusions, including 22 miles of roads, fences, corrals and several cabins which would be impossible to rehabilitate without altering the objectives of the natural area and obtaining the private parcels of land located within the ISA.

#### Solitude

Because of the limited size, easy access from three directions, extensive road system throughout the area and the private inholdings the solitude for the area has been classified as marginal. Although there are many areas where the visitor experiences solitude because of the topography and vegetation, the numerous examples of man's presence in the area severely detracts for the experience.

#### Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

There are good recreation opportunities within the ISA. Activities such as backpacking, hunting, nature study, horseback riding, photography, cross country skiing and winter camping are all feasible. Although the creeks contain Lahontan Cutthroat Trout, it is not legal to fish the creeks. However, due to the small sizes of the creeks, the fish are usually quite viewable. The presence of cool, flowing appeals to a number of people who desire a change from the hot, arid surroundings.

#### Supplemental Values

The outstanding special feature of the ISA is the presence of the Lahontan cutthroat trout. The fact that these fish use the stream in the area as spawning grounds was the reason for the creation of the Natural Area. To protect the quality of the water in the streams, 2,410 acres or 20 percent of the ISA, were fenced to exclude livestock from their headwaters. The trout is listed as "threatened" on the "Federal Register of Threatened and Endangered Species".

An additional aspect of the livestock enclosure is its effect on riparian vegetation. Among the reasons for the enclosure was the protection of the vegetation and prevention of trampling of streambanks. Stabilization of the watershed was a major objective. Since the enclosure was established, there has been increased plant vigor. Reestablishment of the original, native plant community and improvement of wildlife habitat have occurred.

Several additional values are present. There is a large amount of water concentrated in a small area of

three creeks: Pole, Mahogany and Summer Camp. Large stands of aspen trees and scattered groups of mountain mahogany can be found throughout the area. A wide assortment of wildlife is present within the ISA, such as mule deer, antelope, chukar, sage grouse, coyote, bobcat and quail.

#### **MINERAL RESOURCES**

Mineral interest in the area is low. Old assessment scars can be found throughout the northern section of the Natural Area. A mineral examination conducted in 1966 resulted in all 12,316 acres of the ISA being closed to mineral entry. Analysis of samples from the area by the Bureau of Mines in Salt Lake City and the Chemical Research Engineer in Sacramento revealed that the area contains no value for precious metals or other minerals.

#### **ENERGY RESOURCES**

No known oil and gas, geothermal, uranium or thorium deposits occur within the ISA. There are no existing or pending oil, gas or geothermal leases.

#### **RECREATION VALUES**

Motorized recreation use accounts for about 50 visits annually to the area. Most of this use occurs on existing roads to permit access for camping, hiking and hunting. About 5 times a year a camper will drive off-road to get closer to the streams, leaving ruts and tracks through soft damp areas.

There are no developed recreation facilities within or adjacent to the ISA.

Non-motorized recreation use is primarily composed of hunting use for big game (deer and antelope) and upland game birds. There are currently about 200 visits per year in the ISA associated with non-motorized recreation. Big game hunters are under a permit system which is strictly regulated by the Nevada Division of Wildlife. Other non-motorized activities include photography, camping, rockhounding, hiking and nature study.

#### **LIVESTOCK GRAZING**

The Lahontan Cutthroat Trout ISA lies within two grazing allotments - the Soldier Meadows Allotment located in the Sonoma-Gerlach Resource Area and the Paiute Meadows Allotment located in the Paradise-Denio Resource Area. Both allotments have one permittee. With the exception of 160 acres located in the Paiute Meadows Allotment the remaining 12,156 acres are located in the Soldier Meadows Allotment. Within the 12,156 acres is the 2,410 acre fenced enclosure. The Paiute Meadows Allotment contains less than 10 AUMs and no range improvements. The Soldier Meadows Allotment contains between 400 and 450 AUMs and nine range associated projects including four small reservoirs, several fences and two cattleguards. No projects or vegetative manipulations are planned. An Allotment Management Plan is anticipated for the Soldier Meadows Allotment at a future date.

#### **WILDLIFE RESOURCES**

Wild game is plentiful in the form of mule deer, pronghorn antelope and chukar partridge, with the quality of hunting considered to be very good. Most hunting is regulated under permit, license and quota system administered by the Nevada Department of Wildlife.

There are seven wildlife developments associated with the HMP completed for the Natural Area, including fences, gabions, fish passes, water bars and an aspen rehabilitation project.

#### **LANDS AND REALTY**

Private lands in the ISA total 1,256 acres. They are associated with the Soldier Meadows Ranch. Presently, there are no planned land actions in the area. No utility corridors are present or planned.

#### **THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES**

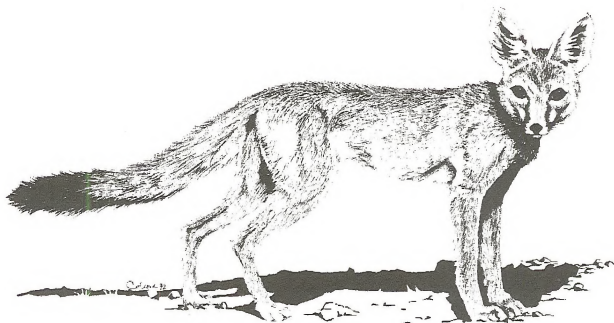
There are no Threatened and Endangered species present other than the Lahontan cutthroat trout which were discussed in the Supplemental Values section.

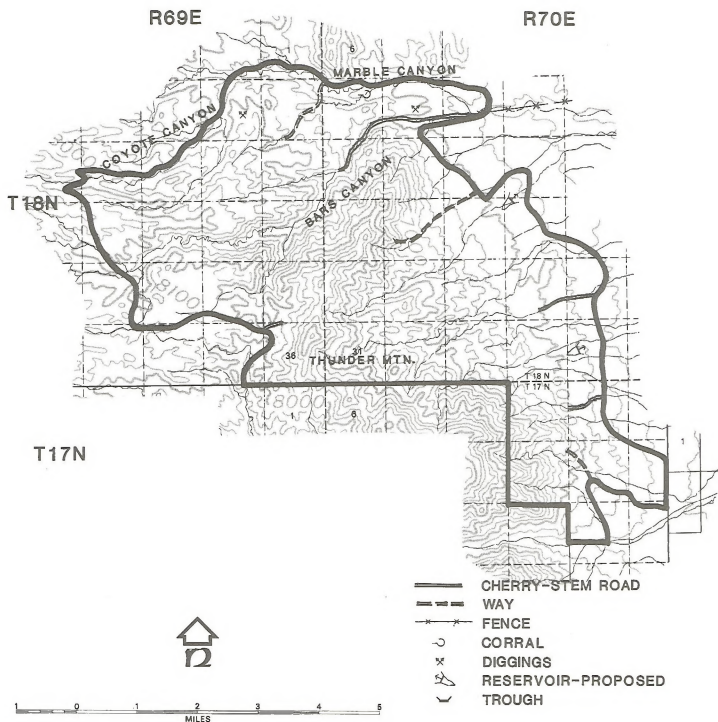
### CULTURAL RESOURCES

An inventory was conducted that covered most of the ISA. Also, another inventory was carried out that dealt with an area adjacent to the study area. Both surveys disclosed prehistoric and historic sites along Summer Camp and Mahogany Creeks, as well as elsewhere in the study area. There are a series of prehistoric hunting blinds adjacent to the study area, but none are present within it. There are no National Register sites or sites that have been declared as being eligible for the National Register present. No Cultural Resource Management Plans have been developed for the area and none are proposed.

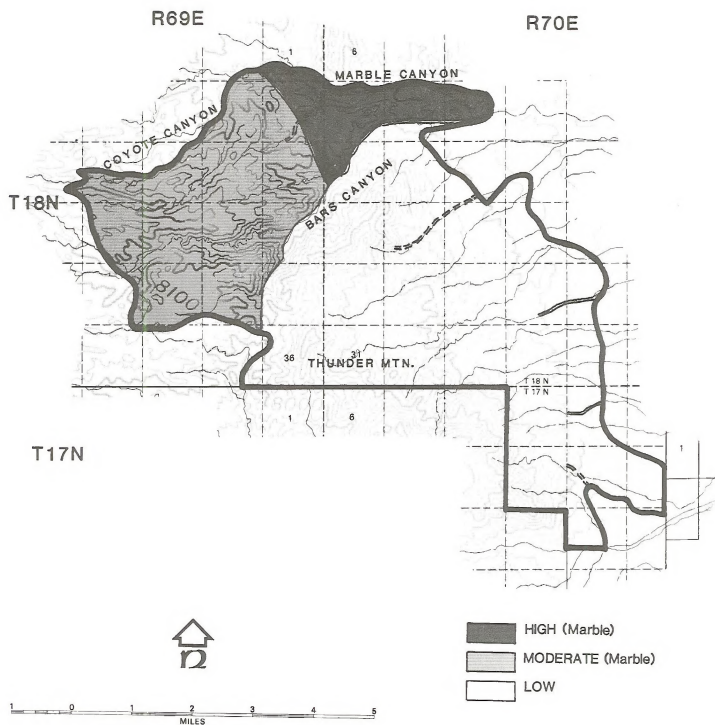
### WATER SOURCES

Water is fairly abundant in the ISA. Besides the two permanent streams, Mahogany Creek and Summer Camp Creek, and the intermittent stream, Pole Creek, there are 28 permanent springs, 10 intermittent springs and 5 intermittent seeps. The total output for the water sources is approximately 160 gallons per minute.



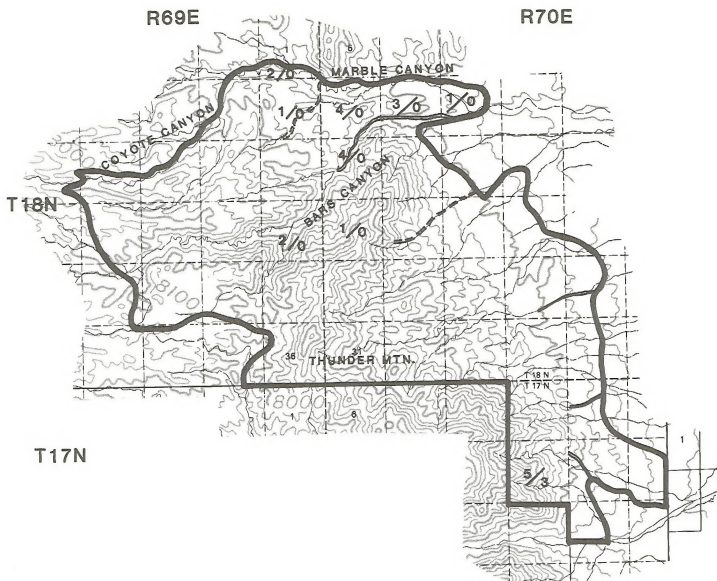


**MAP 3- 1**  
**EXISTING SITUATION**  
**MARBLE CANYON**  
**NV-040-086**



**MAP 3- 2**  
**MINERAL FAVORABILITY**  
**MARBLE CANYON**  
**NV-040-086**



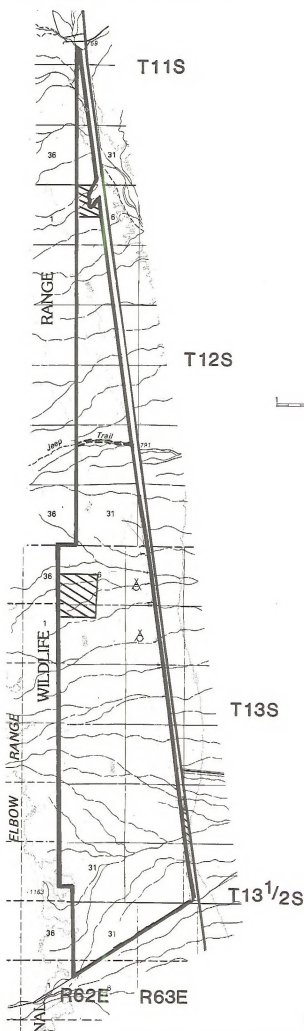


Pre/Post FLPMA MINING CLAIMS

**NONE** POST FLPMA OIL/GAS LEASES

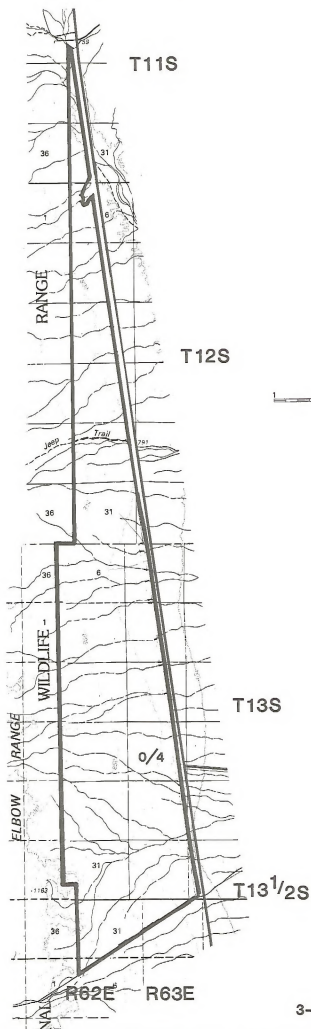


**MAP 3- 3**  
**MINING CLAIMS AND MINERAL LEASES**  
**MARBLE CANYON**  
**NV-040-086**



- WAY
- WELLS
- ▨ MATERIAL SITE

**MAP 3- 4**  
**EXISTING SITUATION**  
**FISH AND WILDLIFE #1**  
**NV-050-201**

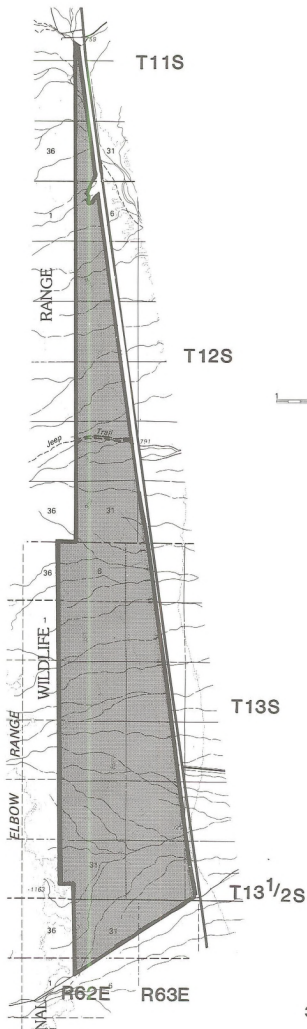


Pre/Post FLPMA MINING CLAIMS

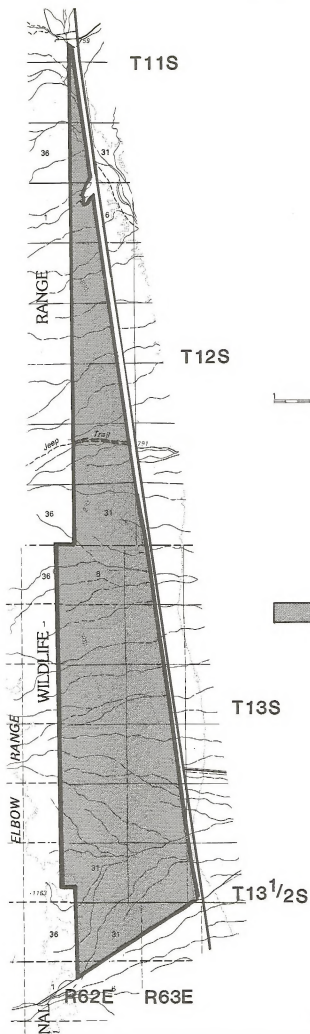
NONE

POST FLPMA OIL/GAS LEASES

**MAP 3- 5**  
**MINING CLAIMS AND**  
**MINERAL LEASES**  
**FISH AND WILDLIFE #1**  
**NV-050-201**

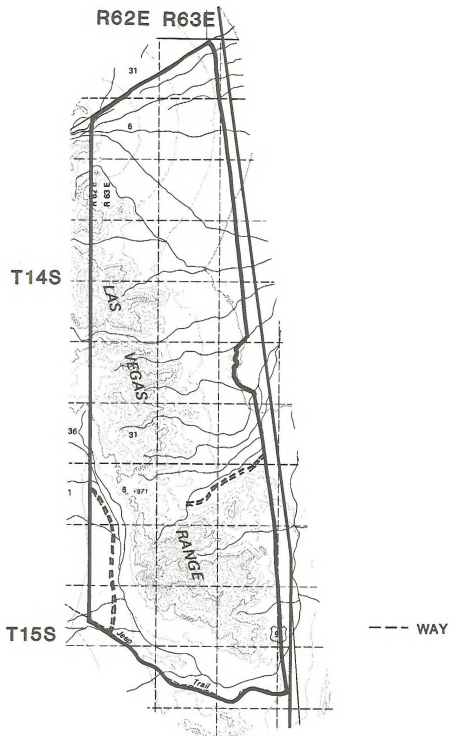


**MAP 3- 6**  
**MINERAL FAVORABILITY**  
**FISH AND WILDLIFE #1**  
**NV-050-201**



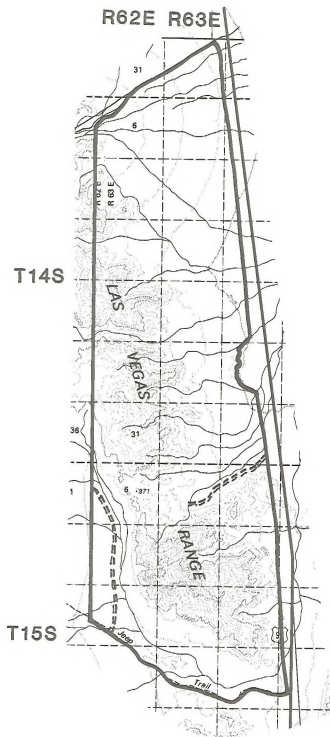
CATEGORY I

**MAP 3- 7**  
**DESERT**  
**TORTOISE HABITAT**  
**FISH AND WILDLIFE #1**  
**NV-050-201**



**MAP 3- 8**  
**EXISTING SITUATION**  
**FISH AND WILDLIFE #2**  
**NV-050-216**



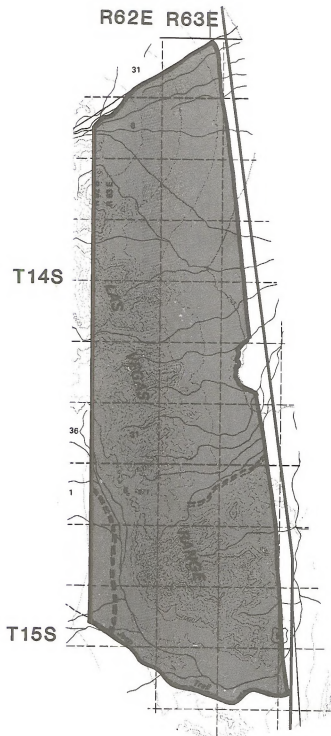


NONE Pre/Post FLPMA  
MINING CLAIMS

NONE POST FLPMA  
OIL/GAS LEASES



**MAP 3- 9**  
**MINING CLAIMS AND MINERAL LEASES**  
**FISH AND WILDLIFE #2**  
**NV-050-216**

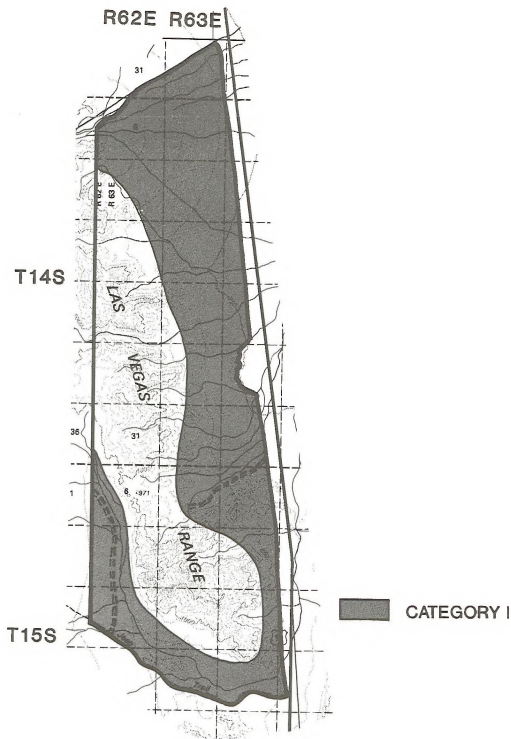


MODERATE

NONE LOW



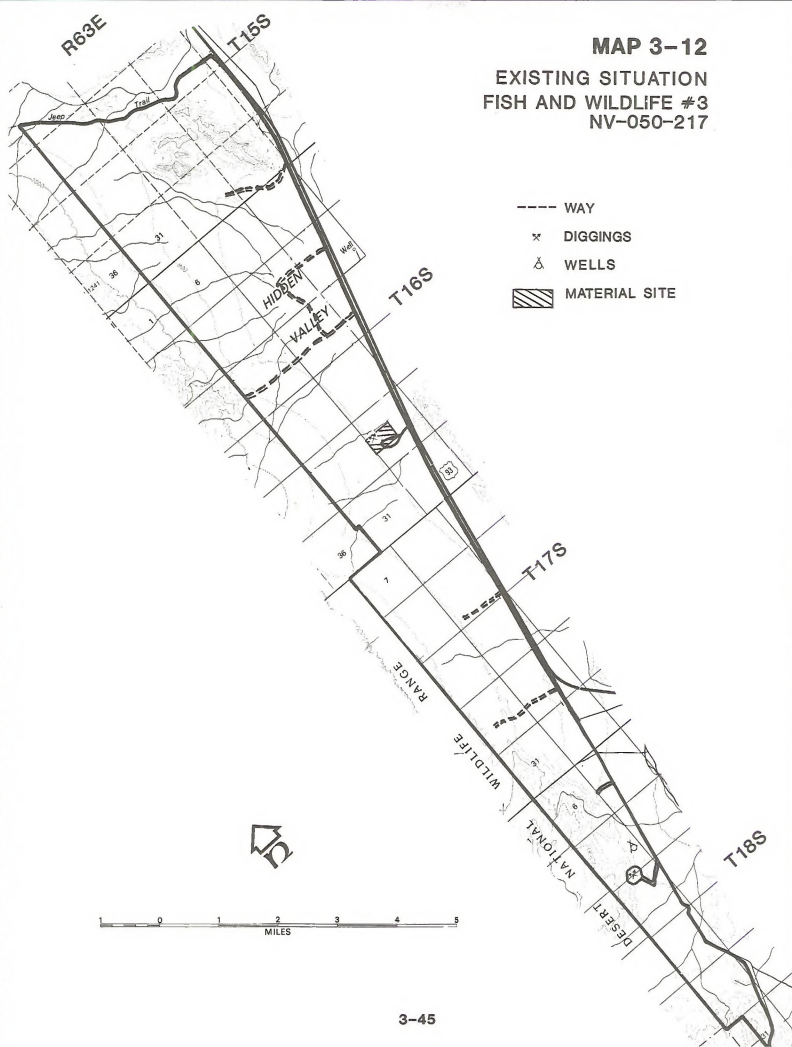
**MAP 3-10**  
**MINERAL FAVORABILITY**  
**FISH AND WILDLIFE #2**  
**NV-050-216**



**MAP 3-11**  
**DESERT TORTOISE HABITAT**  
**FISH AND WILDLIFE #2**  
**NV-050-216**

# MAP 3-12

EXISTING SITUATION  
FISH AND WILDLIFE #3  
NV-050-217



R63E

T15S

## MAP 3-13

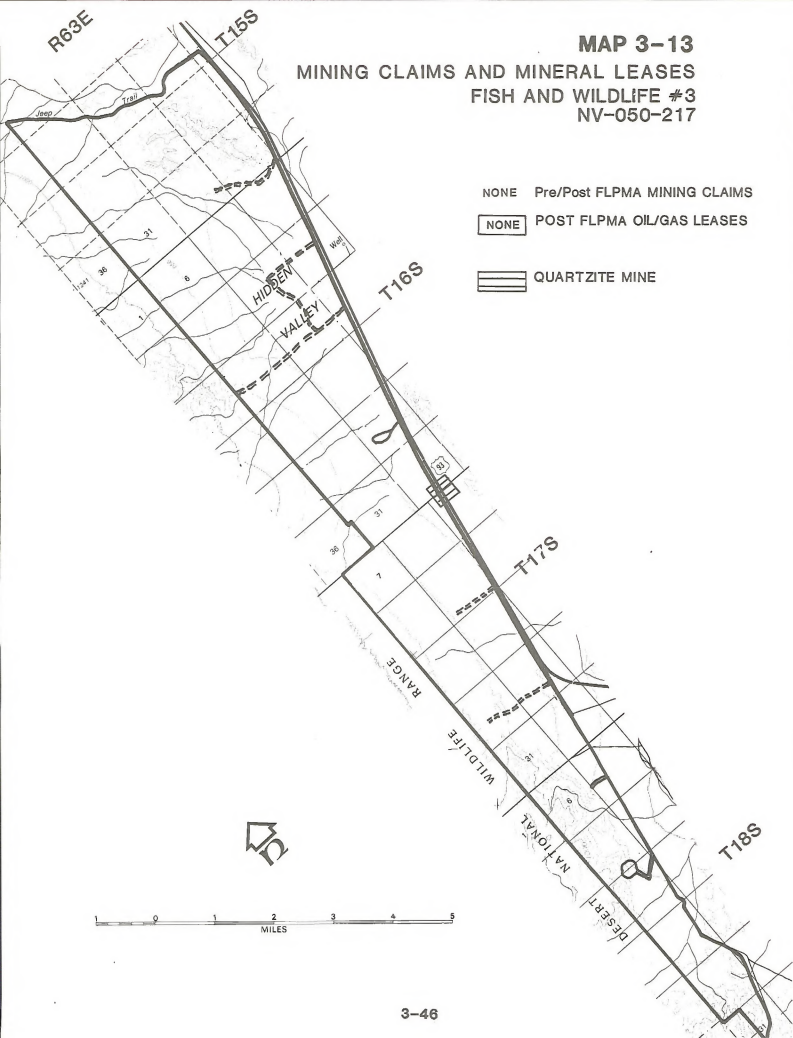
## MINING CLAIMS AND MINERAL LEASES

## FISH AND WILDLIFE #3

NV-050-217

NONE Pre/Post FLPMA MINING CLAIMS

NONE POST FLPMA OIL/GAS LEASES

 QUARTZITE MINE


R63E

T15S

## MAP 3-14

MINERAL FAVORABILITY

FISH AND WILDLIFE #3

NV-050-217

NONE	MODERATE
	LOW

1 0 1 2 3 4 5  
MILES



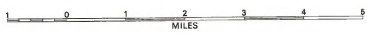


R63E

T15S

**MAP 3-15**  
**DESERT TORTOISE HABITAT**  
**FISH AND WILDLIFE #3**  
**NV-050-217**

 CATEGORY I



T16S

T17S

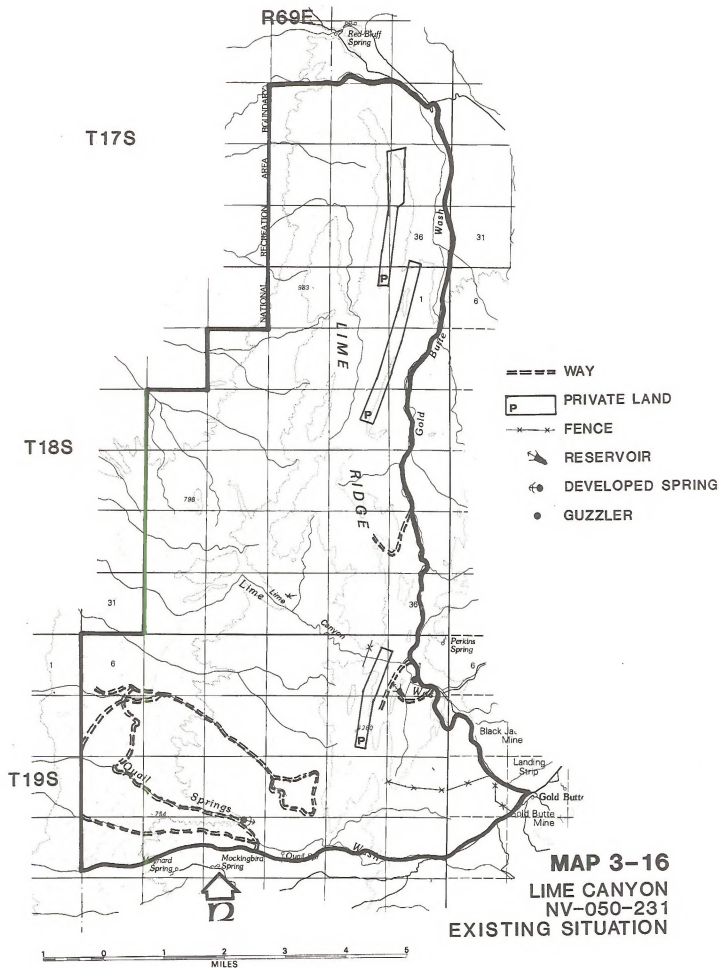
T18S

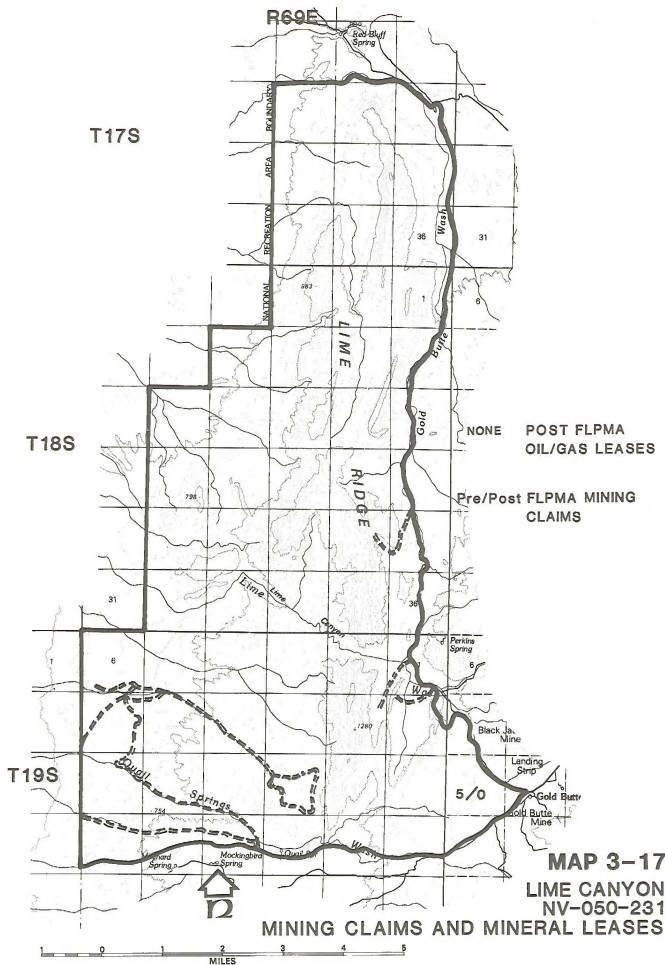
HIDDEN  
VALLEY

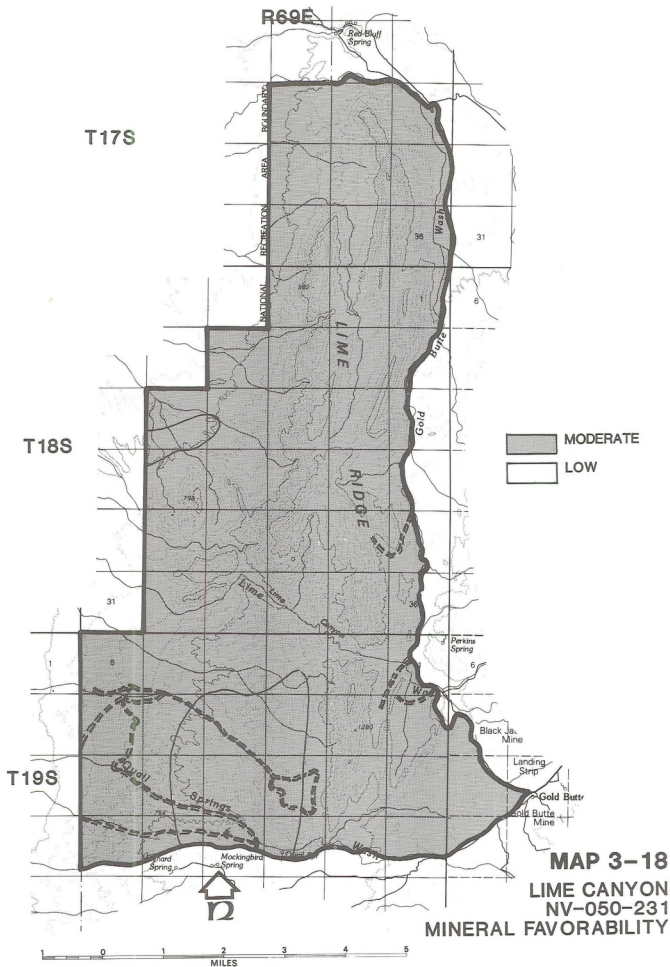
RANGE

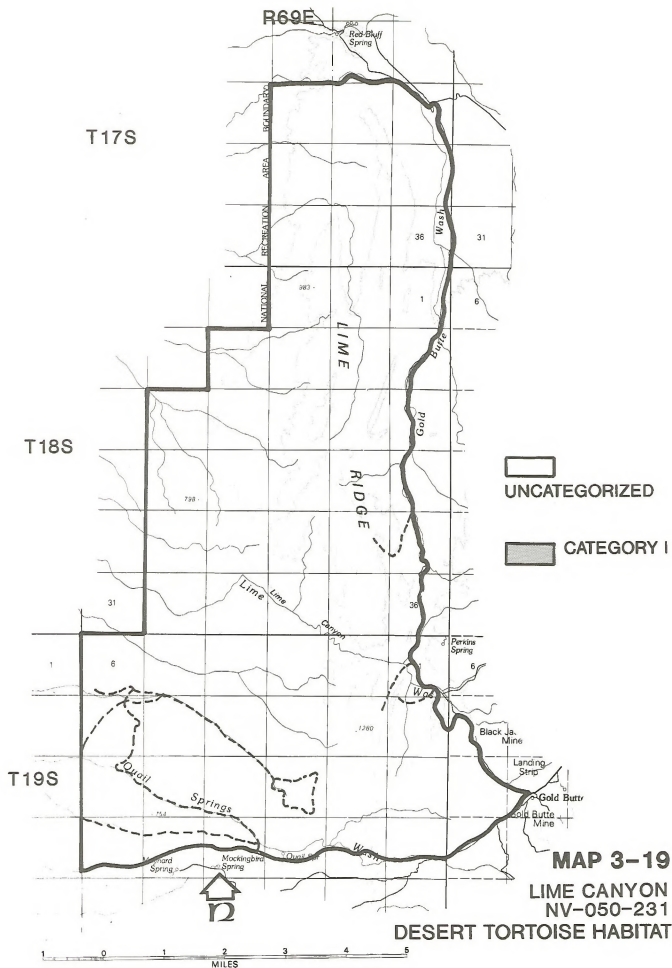
WILDLIFE

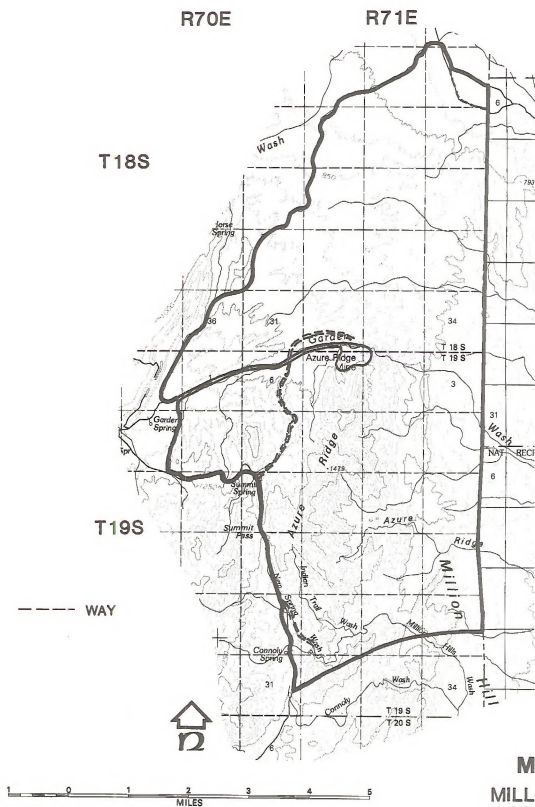
DESERT  
NATIONAL











**MAP 3-20**  
**MILLION HILLS**  
**NV-050-233**  
**EXISTING SITUATION**



R70E

R71E

T18S

T19S

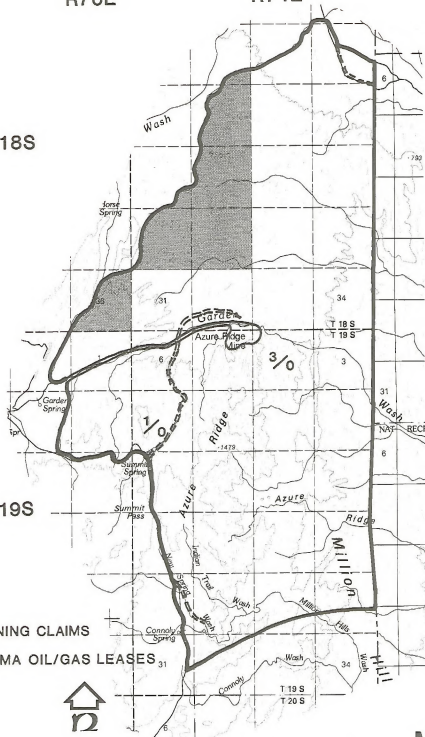
Pre/Post FLPMA MINING CLAIMS



POST FLPMA OIL/GAS LEASES



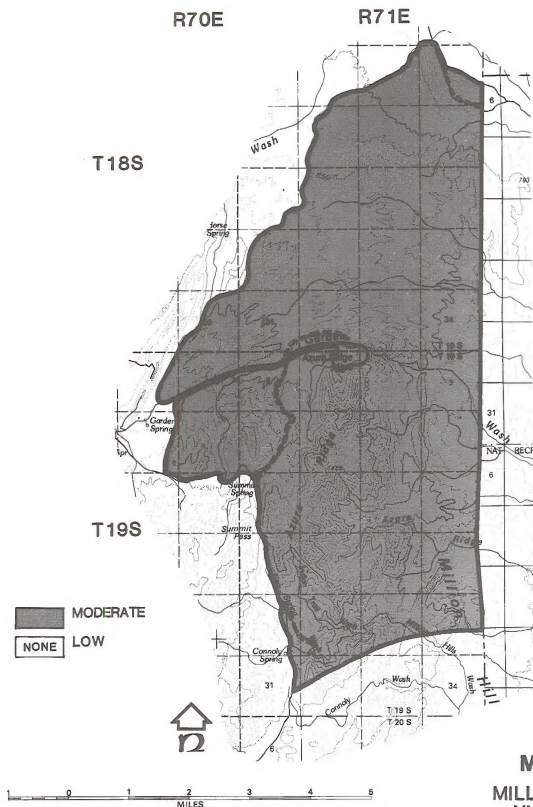
1 0 1 2 3 4 5  
MILES



MAP 3-21

MILLION HILLS  
NV-050-233

MINING CLAIMS AND MINERAL LEASES



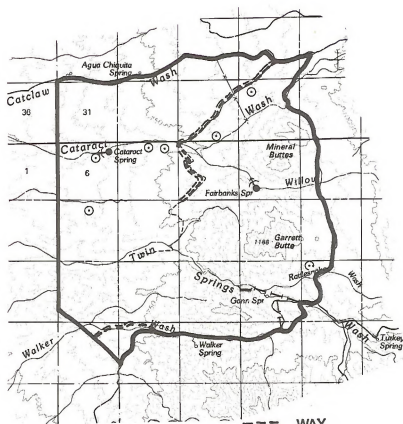
**MAP 3-22**  
**MILLION HILLS**  
**NV-050-233**  
**MINERAL FAVORABILITY**



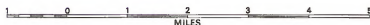
R69E

T19S

T20S

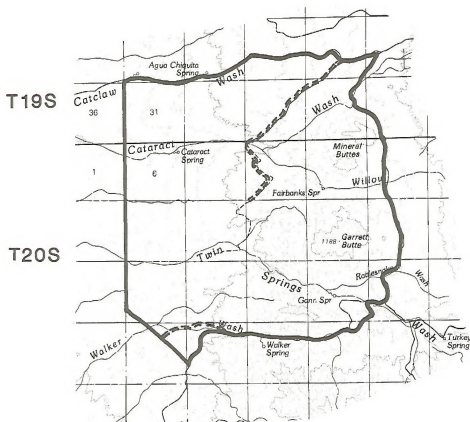


- WAY  
 PIPELINE  
 PROPOSED FENCE  
 DEVELOPED SPRING  
 TROUGH  
 GUZZLER



**MAP 3-24**  
**EXISTING SITUATION**  
**GARRETT BUTTES**  
**NV-050-235**

R69E



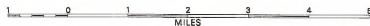
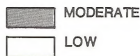
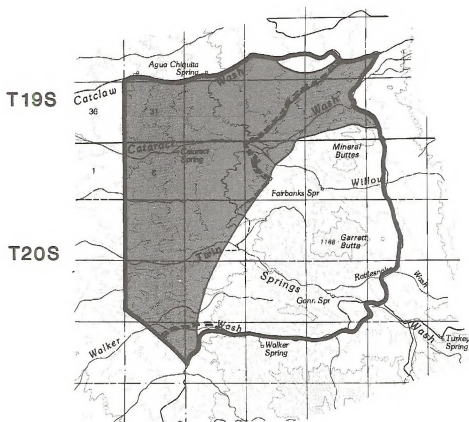
Pre/Post FLPMA MINING CLAIMS NONE

**NONE** POST FLPMA OIL/GAS LEASES



**MAP 3-25**  
**MINING CLAIMS AND MINERAL LEASES**  
**GARRETT BUTTES**  
**NV-050-235**

R69E



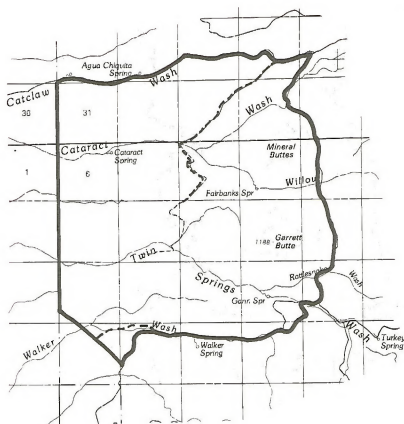
**MAP 3-26**  
**MINERAL FAVORABILITY**  
**GARRETT BUTTES**  
**NV-050-235**



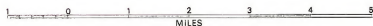
R69E

T19S

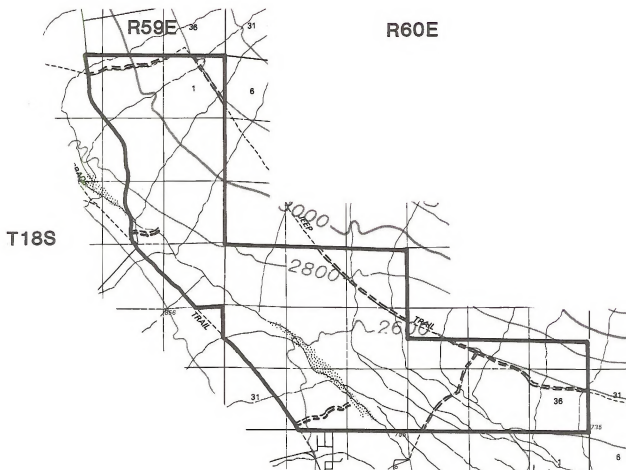
T20S



UNCATEGORIZED



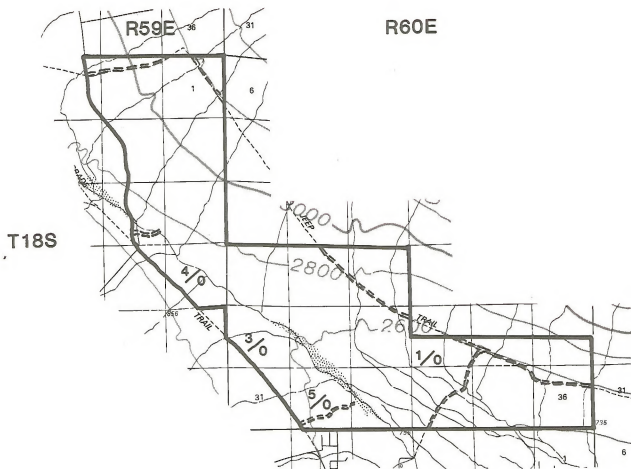
**MAP 3-27**  
**DESERT TORTOISE HABITAT**  
**GARRETT BUTTES**  
**NV-050-235**



==== WAY

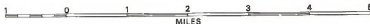


**MAP 3-28**  
**EXISTING SITUATION**  
**QUAIL SPRINGS**  
**NV-050-411**

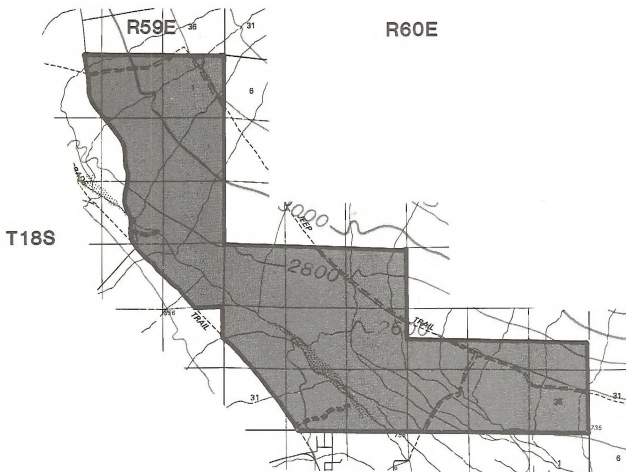


Pre/Post FLPMA MINING CLAIMS

NONE POST FLPMA OIL/GAS LEASES



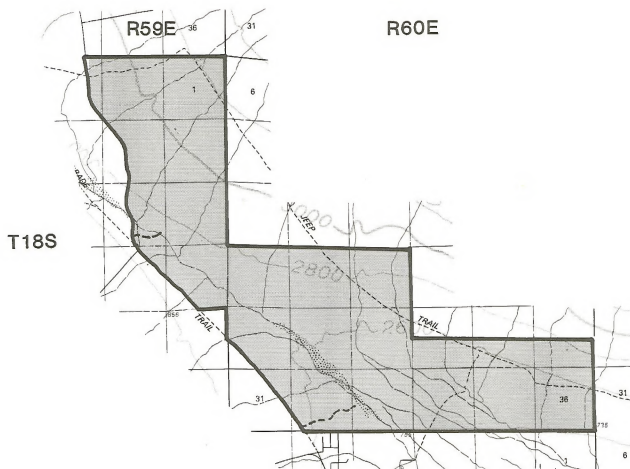
**MAP 3-29**  
**MINING CLAIMS AND MINERAL LEASES**  
**QUAIL SPRINGS**  
**NV-050-411**



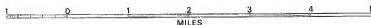
 MODERATE  
 NONE LOW



**MAP 3-30**  
**MINERAL FAVORABILITY**  
**QUAIL SPRINGS**  
**NV-050-411**



CATEGORY II



**MAP 3-31**  
**DESERT TORTOISE HABITAT**  
**QUAIL SPRINGS**  
**NV-050-411**

R64E

T25S

**T26S**



☐ PRIVATE LAND

## == == WAY

## DIGGINGS

 **SPRING****MAP 3-32**

## EXISTING SITUATION

## EL DORADO

NV-050-423





R64E

T25S

T26S



Pre/Post FLPMA MINING CLAIMS

NONE

POST FLPMA OIL/GAS LEASES



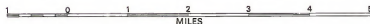
**MAP 3-33**

**MINING CLAIMS AND MINERAL LEASES  
EL DORADO  
NV-050-423**

R64E

T25S

T26S



**MAP 3-34**  
**MINERAL FAVORABILITY**  
**EL DORADO**  
**NV-050-423**

R64E

T25S

T26S



UNCATEGORIZED  
CATEGORY III

0 1 2 3 4 5  
MILES

**MAP 3-35**

**DESERT TORTOISE HABITAT  
EL DORADO  
NV-050-423**

A topographic map of the Eldorado Mountains area in Colorado. The map features a thick black boundary line that encloses a large region. The map is overlaid with a grid system. The vertical axis is labeled with 'T26S' at the top and 'T27S' at the bottom. The horizontal axis is labeled with 'Eldorado Mountains' running vertically. The map includes several labels: 'Well' at the top left, 'Spring' at the top center, 'Ames' at the top right, 'Springs' at the top right, 'Rockefeller Mine' at the bottom right, 'St. Louis Mine' at the bottom left, and 'Eldorado Mountains' running vertically. A grid system is overlaid on the map, with labels 'T26S' and 'T27S' on the left side, and 'Eldorado Mountains' running vertically. The map also shows contour lines and various geographical features.

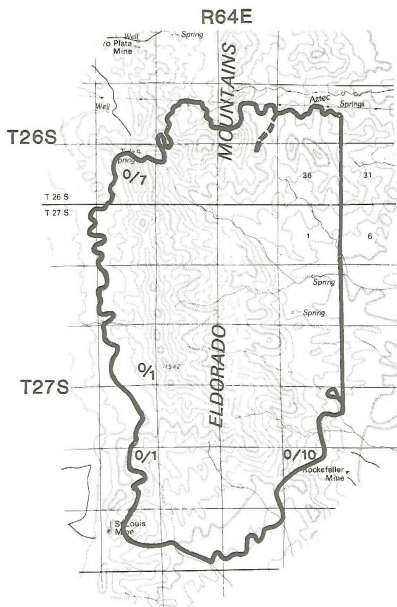
T27S

MOUNTAINS

EL DORADO



**MAP 3-36**  
EXISTING SITUATION  
IRETEBA PEAKS  
NV-050-438

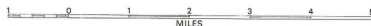
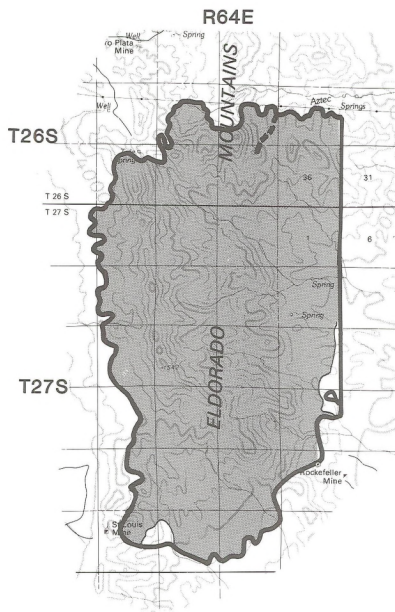


Pre/Post FLPMA MINING CLAIMS

**NONE** POST FLPMA OIL/GAS LEASES

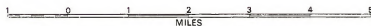
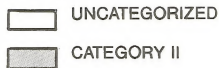
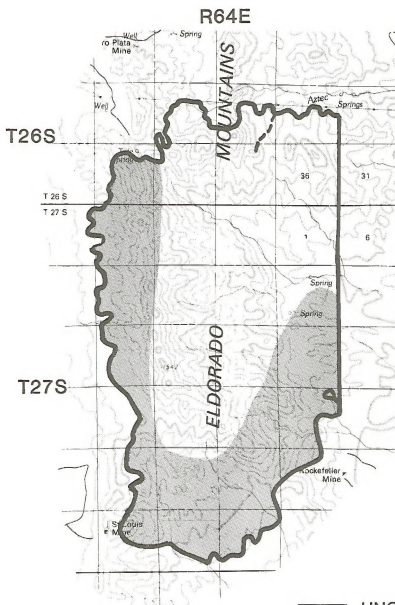
**MAP 3-37**

**MINING CLAIMS AND MINERAL LEASES  
IRETEBA PEAKS  
NV-050-438**



**MAP 3-38**  
**MINERAL FAVORABILITY**  
**IRETEBA PEAKS**  
**NV-050-438**





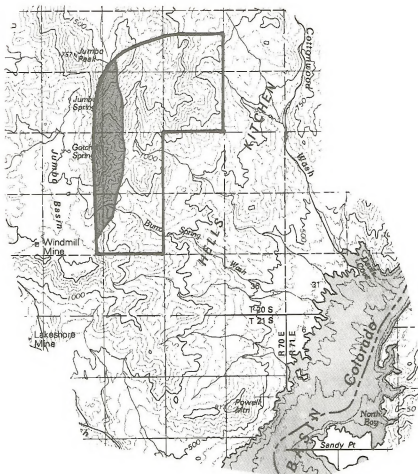
**MAP 3-39**  
**DESERT TORTOISE HABITAT**  
**IRETEBA PEAKS**  
**NV-050-438**

**T20S**

**MAP 3-40**  
**EXISTING SITUATION**  
**JUMBO SPRINGS**  
**NV-050-236**

R70E

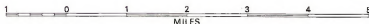
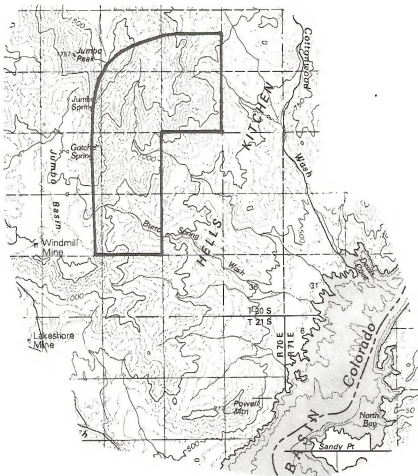
T20S



**MAP 3-41**  
**MINERAL FAVORABILITY**  
**JUMBO SPRINGS**  
**NV-050-236**

R70E

T20S



UNCATEGORIZED

**MAP 3-42**

**DESERT TORTOISE HABITAT  
JUMBO SPRINGS**

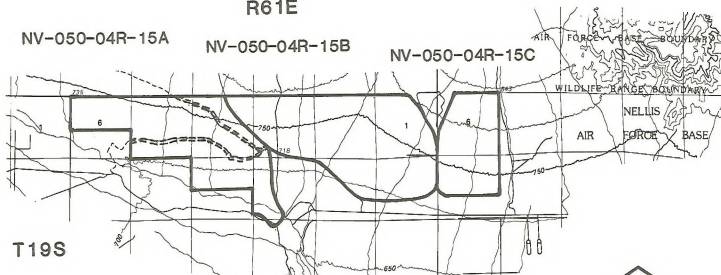
**NV-050-236**

R61E

NV-050-04R-15A

NV-050-04R-15B

NV-050-04R-15C



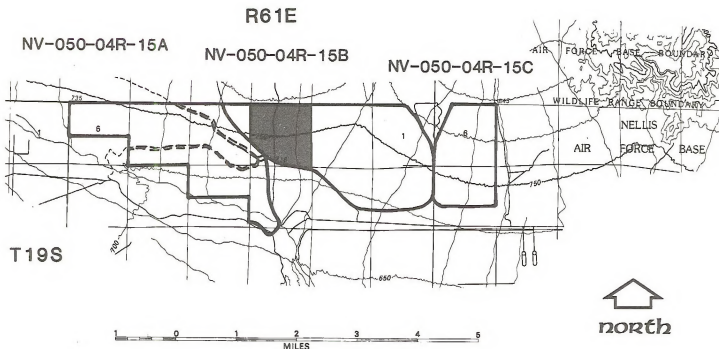
T19S

1 2 3 4 5  
MILES



===== WAY

**MAP 3-43**  
**EXISTING SITUATION**  
**NELLIS**  
**NV-050-04R-15A, 15B, 15C**



NONE Pre/Post FLPMA MINING CLAIMS

POST FLPMA OIL/GAS LEASES

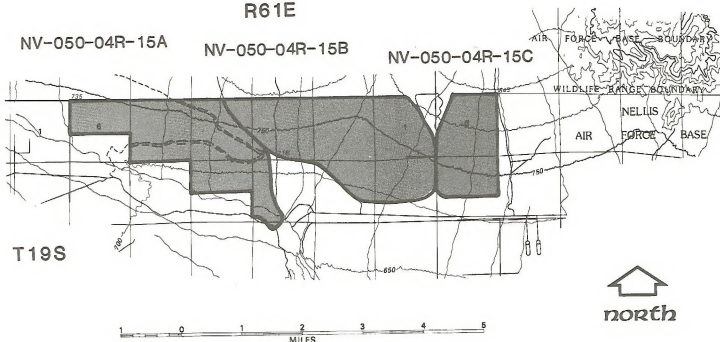
**MAP 3-44**  
**MINING CLAIMS AND MINERAL LEASES**  
**NELLIS**  
**NV-050-04R-15A, 15B, 15C**

R61E

NV-050-04R-15A

NV-050-04R-15B

NV-050-04R-15C



**MAP 3-45**  
**MINERAL FAVORABILITY**  
**NELLIS**  
**NV-050-04R-15A, 15B, 15C**

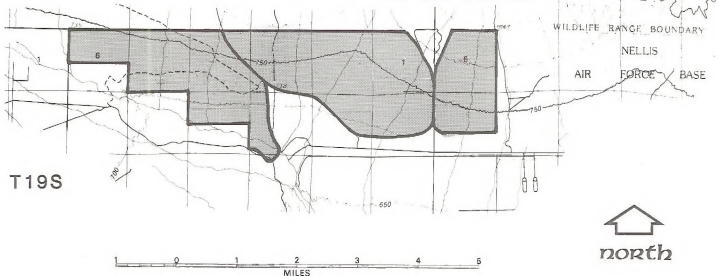


R61E

NV-050-04R-15A

NV-050-04R-15B

NV-050-04R-15C



 CATEGORY II

**MAP 3-46**  
**DESERT TORTOISE HABITAT**  
**NELLIS**  
**NV-050-04R-15A, 15B, 15C**

R62E



T9S

NV-050-01R-16A

T10S

NV-050-01R-16B

NV-050-01R-16C



RESERVOIR



MATERIAL SITE



**MAP 3-47**

EXISTING SITUATION  
EVERGREEN

NV-050-01R-16A, 16B, 16C

R62E



T9S

T10S

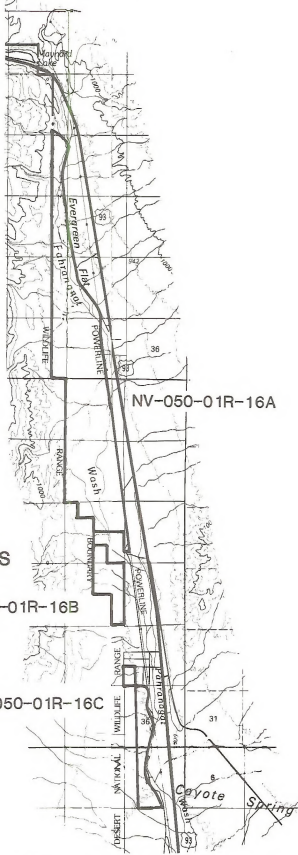
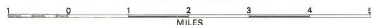
NV-050-01R-16B

NV-050-01R-16C

NV-050-01R-16A

NONE Pre/Post FLPMA MINING CLAIMS

NONE POST FLPMA OIL/GAS LEASES



**MAP 3-48**

**MINING CLAIMS AND MINERAL LEASES  
EVERGREEN**

**NV-050-01R-16A, 16B, 16C**

R62E



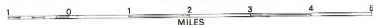
T9S

NV-050-01R-16A

T10S

NV-050-01R-16B

NV-050-01R-16C



**MAP 3-49**  
**MINERAL FAVORABILITY**  
**EVERGREEN**  
**NV-050-01R-16A, 16B, 16C**

R62E



T9S

NV-050-01R-16A

T10S

NV-050-01R-16B

NV-050-01R-16C

CATEGORY I

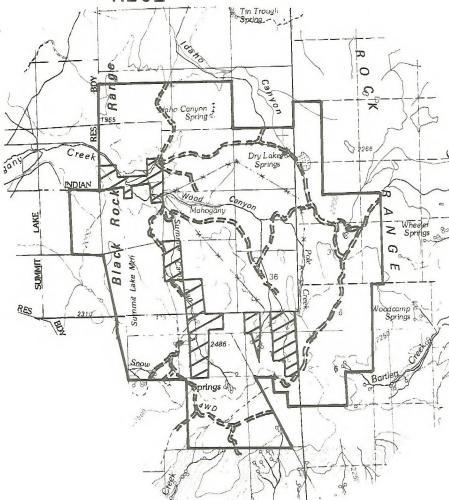
0 1 2 3 4 5  
MILES

**MAP 3-50**

DESERT TORTOISE HABITAT  
EVERGREEN  
NV-050-01R-16A, 16B, 16C

R26E

T42N



-  PRIVATE LAND
-  FENCE
-  RESERVOIR
-  DEVELOPED SPRING

**MAP 3-51**  
**EXISTING SITUATION**  
**LAHONTAN ISA**

# CHAPTER 4

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the environmental consequences of implementing the different wilderness alternatives. The impacts are summarized in Tables 2-1 through 2-14 in Chapter 2. Only the required elements and the environmental issues (impact topics) that were identified during scoping are discussed and analyzed in this chapter. The Scoping section in Chapter 1 contains a list of the Impact topics.

A discussion of the adverse impacts which cannot be avoided, the relationship between short-term uses of man's environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity, and the irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources can be found following the analysis of the alternatives in this chapter.

### MARBLE CANYON WSA (NV-040-086)

#### PROPOSED ACTION (PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE)

The Proposed Action recommends 8,300 acres suitable for wilderness designation and 10,850 acres nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-1).

#### IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES

##### Naturalness (Suitable Portion)

A slight, positive, effect on naturalness would occur with the closure of the recommended suitable portion to off-road vehicles. This action would halt the formation of new tracks associated with repeated motorized vehicle use. Also benefiting naturalness would be the withdrawal of the area to additional mineral exploration and possible development.

##### Naturalness (Nonsuitable Portion)

Surface disturbance associated with mineral exploration activities, including access and drill pads, would physically disturb and impair the natural character of 6 acres north of Bars Canyon in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. This disturbance would include construction of drill pads and up to 2 miles of bladed access resulting in localized areas of scarified topography. The visual impacts of these disturbances would be limited to about 6 acres by the broken topography and the screening provided by the juniper woodland.

Two stock reservoirs (.25 acres each) would be constructed along the eastern bench in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. Disturbance of soil and vegetation would result from the use of a bulldozer in constructing the reservoirs and from cattle congregation around the reservoirs. Naturalness values would be impaired on 2 acres within the immediate vicinity of each reservoir. The structures themselves would result in a modified landform and detract little from the natural character of the area because of the open but dissected nature of the terrain where they are to be constructed.

The bi-annual use of two motorbikes for livestock trailing and approximately 17 motorized recreational visits per year would continue within the nonsuitable area. Continued use of vehicles off roads would gradually impair the natural character on accessible portions of the WSA over the long term as vehicle tracks are imprinted on the landscape.

##### Solitude and Primitive Recreation (Suitable Portion)

Solitude and primitive unconfined recreation opportunities would be slightly impaired from vehicle travel, drilling, and blasting associated with marble exploration in the nonsuitable portion. These sights and sounds would affect solitude in the suitable area south of Bars Canyon. There would be negligible long-term effects



to solitude due to the temporary short duration nature of the operations.

The elimination of additional mineral exploration and possible development, as well as the elimination of off-road vehicle use would tend to insure continued solitude and primitive recreation.

#### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation (Nonsuitable Portion)**

A small exploration program targeting marble reserves would impair solitude and primitive unconfined recreation opportunities near Bar's Canyon in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. Sights and sounds from vehicle travel, drilling and blasting would be limited by the broken topography and the screening provided by the juniper woodland. Long-term effects on primitive and unconfined recreation would be negligible due to the sporadic and temporary nature of these mining disturbances. Solitude would be slightly diminished during the construction of two stock reservoirs along the eastern bench in the nonsuitable portion.

Within the western part of the nonsuitable area, motorbikes are used by permittees to trail livestock through the area. The time of year this activity occurs is dependant on the rotation cycles of pastures between the BLM and the Forest Service lands. The effects on solitude are minor.

#### **Special Features**

The bristlecone pine and many of the scenic geologic features and archaeological values, as well as some of the prime raptor habitat are located within the suitable portion of the WSA and would receive the added protection afforded from wilderness designation. The special features in the nonsuitable portion which include raptor habitat, archaeological values and scenic geologic features are not expected to be adversely affected even without wilderness designation. The disturbance of 10 acres for mineral and reservoir development will have an insignificant impact on raptor habitat which includes all of the WSA and the lands surrounding it. Both the raptor habitat and the scenic geologic features are associated with the more rugged and inaccessible areas of the nonsuitable portion. Due to the ruggedness and inaccessibility of most of the special features as well as project-specific mitigation of impacts to archaeological values, the few activities expected to occur in the nonsuitable portion would have little affect on them.

**CONCLUSION:** The excellent opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, highly scenic geologic values and the stands of bristlecone pine would be preserved. Impacts to the wilderness qualities in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would occur on approximately 10 acres concentrated north of Bars Canyon and on the eastern benches of the WSA. The majority of the disturbance would be related to marble exploration and stock reservoir construction.

#### **IMPACTS ON EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF NON-ENERGY MINERAL RESOURCES**

All lands within the 8,300 acre suitable portion of the Marble Canyon WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. However, there are existing claims (marble) within the suitable area and marble exploration and development is possible on these even if the suitable area is designated as wilderness. The suitable area has been identified as having low potential for mineral resources. Exploration for marble resources on valid existing claims would be done in a manner that minimizes impacts on the wilderness resource while protecting the rights of the operator. Development is not anticipated to take place within the suitable portion of the WSA because of the low-grade quality of the marble and distance to potential markets.

All lands within the 10,850 acre nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open for mineral entry. All potential mineral resources would be available for exploration and development. This includes approximately 1,915 acres of high potential for marble and approximately 5,745 acres of moderate potential for marble, both located within the northern portion of the WSA. Actual development of mineral resources is not expected to occur within either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA as a result of exploration due to the reasons stated above.

**CONCLUSION:** Exploration and development of marble resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion. Marble resources could be developed on existing claims in the suitable portion. All lands within the nonsuitable portion would remain open to mineral entry.

There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the nonsuitable portion.

#### **IMPACTS ON GRAZING MANAGEMENT**

The use of motorbikes to assist in the trailing of livestock would no longer be allowed within the suitable portion. The majority of the suitable portion is too rugged to accommodate the use of motorbikes. Trailing could still be accomplished by horseback through the suitable portion or by using motorbikes just to the west within the nonsuitable portion.

The two livestock reservoirs proposed to be constructed to provide intermittent water sources in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would be built. There would be no impacts on grazing management in the nonsuitable portion.

**CONCLUSION:** The use of motorbikes to assist in the trailing of livestock would not be allowed in the suitable portion. This would have only a negligible effect on grazing operations since only a small portion of the suitable area lends itself to motorbike use.

#### **ADVERSE IMPACTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED**

The unavoidable adverse impacts would be those associated with the loss of naturalness from mineral exploration and construction of two stock reservoirs projected within the recommended nonsuitable area.

#### **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY**

Nondesignation of the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA would allow all present short-term uses to continue. Mineral exploration would reduce naturalness over the long term.

#### **IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES**

There would be no irreversible and irretrievable commitment of the wilderness resource because the only irreversible activity, mining is not expected to occur.

#### **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

All 19,150 acres of public land in the Marble Canyon WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-2).

#### **IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES**

##### **Naturalness**

Surface disturbance associated with mineral exploration activities on valid claims, including minimal access construction and drill pads, would physically disturb and impair the natural character of 2 acres within the Bars Canyon area of the Marble Canyon WSA. Construction of drill pads and access would result in localized areas of scarified topography which would last many years. The visual impacts of these disturbances would be limited by the broken topography and the screening provided by the juniper woodland.

A slight, positive effect on naturalness would occur with the closure of the WSA to motorized recreational vehicles (approximately 25 visits per year). This action would halt the formation of new two-wheel tracks associated with repeated motorized-vehicle use. Also benefiting naturalness would be the withdrawal of the area to additional mineral exploration.

##### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation**

Solitude and primitive recreation would be slightly impaired in the northern portion of the WSA from the presence of a small exploration program targeting marble reserves. Sights and sounds from vehicle travel, drilling and blasting would be limited, however, by the broken topography and the screening provided by the juniper woodland. There would be negligible long-term effects to solitude and primitive recreation due to the temporary short duration nature of the operations. The elimination of additional marble exploration

would insure continued solitude and primitive recreation.

#### **Special Features**

The area's special features including bristlecone pine, scenic geologic features, archaeological values and raptor habitat would remain protected under this alternative. They would receive the added protection afforded from wilderness designation.

**CONCLUSION:** The bristlecone pine, geologic and archaeological values and prime raptor habitat would be preserved. The outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive unconfined recreation would be retained on 19,148 acres.

#### **IMPACTS ON EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF NON-ENERGY MINERAL RESOURCES**

The entire 19,150 acre Marble Canyon WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of marble resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. This includes approximately 1,915 acres of high potential for marble and approximately 5,745 acres of moderate potential for marble, both located within the northern portion of the WSA.

Exploration for mineral resources on valid existing claims would be done in a manner that minimizes impacts on the wilderness resource while protecting the rights of the operator. Exploration to determine the extent of marble deposits, disturbing approximately 2 acres, would take place within the WSA. With or without wilderness designation, actual development of mineral resources is not projected to take place within the WSA due to the low grade quality of the marble and the distance to potential markets.

**CONCLUSION:** Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. Restricted exploration activity would occur. Development of the marble reserves is not expected to take place.

#### **IMPACTS ON GRAZING MANAGEMENT**

The two stock reservoirs proposed to be constructed to provide intermittent water sources on the east bench would not be constructed. This would not affect current grazing practices within the WSA. The presence of the reservoirs would help tap available run-off; however, water hauling by the operator would still be necessary and continue. The use of motorbikes for the trailing of cattle would not be allowed. Switching from the use of motorbikes to horses to accomplish livestock trailing would be more costly and time consuming, thereby imparting some inconvenience to the operator.

**CONCLUSION:** The construction of two stock reservoirs would not be allowed having no effect on current grazing practices. The switching from the use of motorbikes to horses to accomplish livestock trailing would have a slight adverse economic impact on the operator.

#### **NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

None of the 19,150 acres of the Marble Canyon WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-3).

#### **IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES**

##### **Naturalness**

Surface disturbance associated with mineral exploration activities, including access routes and drill pads, would physically disturb and impair the natural character of 6 acres north of Bars Canyon in the WSA. Construction of drill pads and up to 2 miles of access would result in localized areas of scarified topography which would last many years. The visual impacts of these disturbances would be limited to approximately 6 acres by the broken topography and the screening provided by the juniper woodland.

Two stock reservoirs (.25 acres each) would be constructed along the eastern bench in the WSA. Disturbance of soil and vegetation would result from the use of a bulldozer in constructing the reservoirs and from cattle congregation around the reservoirs. Naturalness values would be impaired on 2 acres

within the immediate vicinity of each reservoir. The structures themselves would result in a modified landform and detract from the natural character of the area because of the open nature of the terrain where they are to be constructed.

The bi-annual use of two to four motorbikes for livestock trailing, vehicle use for mineral exploration and 25 motorized recreational visits per year would continue. Continued long-term use of vehicles off roads would gradually create a few primitive two-track routes. These vehicle trails would be dispersed along the more accessible eastern benches of the WSA.

#### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation**

A small exploration program targeting marble reserves would impair solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities near Bar's Canyon. Sights and sounds from vehicle travel, drilling and blasting would be limited by the broken topography and the screening provided by the juniper woodland. Opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be slightly diminished during the construction of two stock reservoirs along the eastern bench.

Within the western part of the WSA, motorbikes are used by permittees to trail livestock through the area. The time of year this activity occurs is dependant on the rotation cycles of pastures between the BLM and the Forest Service lands. The effects on solitude are minor.

#### **Special Features**

The area's special features including bristlecone pine and archaeological values would be largely unaffected. The bristlecone pine are located in a very rugged area where no disturbing uses are expected to occur. The geologic features, raptor habitat, and archaeological values located within the steep-walled Bar's Canyon and Marble Canyons are fairly inaccessible and would not be affected to any large degree by activities proposed within the WSA. The disturbance of 10 acres for mineral and reservoir development will have an insignificant impact on raptor habitat which includes all of the WSA and the lands surrounding it. A 2-acre portion in the Bar's Canyon area would be slightly impaired due to the marble exploration program. These impacts would be short-lived and no long-term impacts are expected.

**CONCLUSION:** Impairment of the wilderness values would occur on approximately 10 acres near Bars Canyon and the eastern bench of the Marble Canyon WSA. Opportunities for solitude and primitive unconfined recreation, the bristlecone pines, raptor habitat and archaeological values would be unaffected. The remaining 19,140 acres would retain their wilderness values except for the creation of a few primitive two-tracked routes.

#### **IMPACTS ON EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF NON-ENERGY MINERAL RESOURCES**

All lands within the Marble Canyon WSA would remain open for mineral entry. All potential mineral resources would be available for exploration and development. This includes approximately 1,915 acres of high potential for marble and approximately 5,745 acres of moderate potential for marble, both located within the northern portion of the WSA. (See Mineral Favorability Map).

Because all potential minerals would remain available for development, there would be no impact on the exploration for or development of potential mineral resources.

**CONCLUSION:** All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources.

#### **IMPACTS ON GRAZING MANAGEMENT**

The two livestock water reservoirs proposed along the east bench of the Marble Canyon WSA would be constructed and the use of motorbikes for trailing of livestock would continue.

**CONCLUSION:** There would be no impact on grazing management within the Marble Canyon WSA under the No Wilderness Alternative.

## FISH AND WILDLIFE NO. 1 (NV-050-201)

### PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative)

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 11,090 acre area as unsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-4).

#### IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES

##### Naturalness

Under the Proposed Action, the extraction of sand and gravel from the material sites rights-of-way would physically disturb 320 acres within the WSA.

It is projected that exploration would eventually occur on the existing mining claims located within the southeast portion of the WSA. Exploration efforts would entail the construction of 1 mile of road and the trenching of test pits. A projected total of 2.5 acres of ground would be physically disturbed from this mining activity. Naturalness would be lost not only on the 2.5 acres disturbed, but also on the surrounding area due to the impacts to visual resources.

The projected designation of a 1 mile wide utility corridor would allow the development of above ground utilities extending the 14 mile length of the WSA. Construction projections of five transmission lines and one access road would result in the removal of vegetation and the disruption of soils. This activity would physically disturb an estimated 480 acres within the WSA. The placement of towers and transmission lines across the landscape would result in a modified landform, detracting from the natural character of the entire area because of the open terrain where they are to be constructed.

Motorized recreational use such as off-road driving, vehicle camping and sightseeing would continue within the WSA under the Proposed Action. The study area's terrain consists of an open bajada that is readily accessible to vehicles. The construction of access roads associated with the projected development of new utilities would increase accessibility into the WSA for motorized vehicles. The newly created tracks and ways from increased off-road activity would physically disturb an estimated 20 acres within the WSA. Motorized recreational use is projected to increase from an estimated 45 to 90 visits annually.

Disturbances caused by actions described above including sand and gravel operations, mining, utility corridors, and off-road vehicle use would impair the visual quality of naturalness on the entire 11,090 acres of the WSA because these activities would be seen from all locations in the WSA. These activities would create unnatural lines, add color contrasts and impose non-natural forms and structures on an otherwise natural setting.

##### Solitude and Primitive Recreation

Under the Proposed Action, outstanding opportunities for solitude within the WSA would be lost on all 11,090 acres as a result of the unnatural sights and sounds created by the continuing use of heavy equipment for the construction and maintenance of the proposed utilities and associated roads, and by motorized recreational vehicles. In addition, there would be continued use of heavy motorized vehicles to extract sand and gravel from the existing material sites and exploration of existing mining claims. Increased motorized activity would contribute to the loss of opportunities for solitude within the WSA.

The aforementioned activities would further diminish opportunities for primitive (non-motorized) recreation within the entire WSA. Under the Proposed Action, visitors would be less inclined to frequent the area for hiking, rock collecting and sightseeing. Primitive recreational use within the WSA is projected to increase from an estimated 15 to 20 visits annually.

##### Special Features

The desert tortoise is a special feature in this WSA. Impacts on the desert tortoise and its habitat are discussed under the topic Impacts to Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise.



**CONCLUSION:** Projected development of utilities, motorized recreational vehicle use, extraction of sand and gravel and mineral exploration are projected to physically disturb an estimated 823 acres. The visual perception of naturalness would be impaired on the entire WSA. Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation within the entire WSA would be diminished and, in some instances lost due to audio and visual distractions.

**IMPACTS ON EXPLORATION FOR AND DEVELOPMENT OF NON-ENERGY MINERAL RESOURCES**  
All lands within the WSA would remain open for mineral entry and all mineral resources would be available for exploration and development. Mineral development is not foreseen within the WSA. Extraction of sand and gravel on 320 acres within two existing material sites would occur. Mitigation measures required to protect the desert tortoise (Chapter 2 - Non-Energy Mineral Resource Actions) would impact methods and costs of exploration and development.

**CONCLUSION:** All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. No adverse impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources is anticipated.

#### **IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE**

Under the Proposed Action, motorized recreational use would continue within the WSA. Motorized recreational uses are projected to increase from an estimated 45 to 90 visits annually. The majority of the use would occur along the eastern boundary of the WSA, where the projected access roads would be constructed. The WSA provides opportunities for motorized hunting and trapping access, dirt-biking, off-road driving and limited vehicle camping.

**CONCLUSION:** Motorized recreational use would increase under the Proposed Action. No adverse impacts to this use is expected to occur.

#### **IMPACTS ON DEVELOPMENT OF UTILITIES**

A total of five transmission lines would be developed in the WSA. Mitigation measures (see Chapter 2) designed to protect desert tortoises and their habitat would affect site specific line location and access. However, four buried utility lines, two gas and two fiber optic, discussed in the draft EIS would not be developed because of mitigating measures and restrictions required for the protection of Category I desert tortoise habitat.

**CONCLUSION:** The proposed action would allow the development of five transmission lines in the WSA, however, four buried utility lines would not be developed because of unacceptable impacts on desert tortoise in Category I habitat.

#### **IMPACTS ON EXISTING MATERIAL SITE RIGHTS-OF-WAY**

The Nevada Department of Transportation would be able to use any or all of their existing material sites at their discretion subject to mitigation required for the desert tortoise.

**CONCLUSION:** No impact to existing material site rights-of-way.

#### **IMPACTS ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

The 11,090 acres of crucial desert tortoise habitat within the WSA would not receive the added protection afforded from wilderness designation but would be intensively managed to protect desert tortoise habitat under a projected Category I tortoise habitat designation. Even with the implementation of the mitigating measures described in Chapter 2, there will be a loss of 823 acres of desert tortoise habitat due to the construction of five 500 kv powerlines, removal of sand and gravel, mineral exploration and motorized recreational vehicle use. This amounts to a loss of seven percent of the WSA's Category I desert tortoise habitat. While replacement habitat could be provided outside of the WSA as a mitigating measure, the loss of habitat within the WSA would occur.

The draft EIS projected the construction of four buried utility lines in addition to the current projection of five electrical transmission lines. The impact of these lines would be to fragment the tortoise habitat and increase the loss of habitat dramatically. As a result of the disturbance associated with construction of four lineal underground lines and the access routes that would result, the loss of habitat would increase from 823 to 5,473 acres. The habitat would be fragmented in two ways: 1) three narrow strips 14 miles long would be created in-between the four buried lines and 2) the habitat would be fragmented into two areas - one east of the utility corridor and one west of the utility corridor. This greater loss of habitat is inconsistent with the management goals associated with the projected Category I habitat designation and therefore the four buried lines are no longer projected for construction.

**CONCLUSION:** 823 acres of Category I desert tortoise habitat would be lost due to utility development, sand and gravel extraction, motorized recreational use and mineral exploration.

#### **ADVERSE IMPACTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED**

The unavoidable adverse impacts would be the loss of wilderness values on all 11,090 acres and the loss of 823 acres of crucial desert tortoise habitat as a result of utility line construction, sand and gravel extraction, motorized recreational use and mineral exploration.

#### **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY**

All present short-term uses could continue. Current projections reduce the amount of desert tortoise habitat in the future (long-term) by seven percent. It will take years of future study to correlate the long-term impact this loss of habitat will have on tortoise populations.

#### **IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES**

The projected actions would result in the Irreversible and Irretrievable commitment (loss) of 11,090 acres containing wilderness values and 823 acres of crucial desert tortoise habitat due to the permanent alteration of the area as a result of electrical transmission line construction and sand and gravel extraction.

#### **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

All 11,090 acres of public land in the Fish and Wildlife No. 1 WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-5).

#### **IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES**

##### **Naturalness**

Naturalness would be enhanced by the closure of the WSA to motorized use halting the formation of new tracks and ways associated with repeated cross country off-road vehicle use and allowing existing tracks to revegetate. Access to and extraction of sand and gravel from the three existing material sites would physically disturb 320 acres. The sand and gravel operations could be seen from all locations in the WSA and would result in the loss of the visual quality of naturalness in all of the WSA.

##### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation**

The outstanding opportunities for solitude that exist within the WSA would be impaired but not lost within the entire WSA due to activities associated with sand and gravel extraction. During active sand and gravel operations the opportunities for solitude would be severely impaired. However, when no operations are being conducted little if any impacts would occur. Primitive recreation activities would be similarly affected.

##### **Special Features**

The desert tortoise is a special feature in this WSA. Impacts on the desert tortoise and its habitat are discussed under the topic Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise.

**CONCLUSION:** Extraction of sand and gravel is projected to physically disturb an estimated 320 acres. The visual perception of naturalness would be impaired on the entire



WSA. Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation within the entire WSA would be diminished during periods of active sand and gravel operations due to audio and visual distractions.

#### **IMPACTS ON EXPLORATION FOR AND DEVELOPMENT OF NON-ENERGY MINERAL RESOURCES**

The 11,090 acres would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry with the exception of the two material sites (320 acres) which could be used for sand and gravel extraction by the Nevada Department of Transportation. Exploration and development of mineral resources (none of which is projected) would be foregone on all 11,090 acres. The 2.5 acres of exploratory surface disturbance projected under nonwilderness would not occur.

**CONCLUSION:** Exploration for and development of mineral resources would be foregone within the WSA due to a withdrawal from mineral entry. 320 acres would be developed by the state for sand and gravel extraction on existing material sites.

#### **IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE**

Wilderness designation would close the 11,090 acre Fish and Wildlife No. 1 WSA to all forms of motorized recreational use. Approximately 45 visits annually of cross country motorized recreational use, including off-road driving, motorized access for hunting and vehicle camping, would be eliminated from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for motorized recreational use is located throughout the region; therefore, motorized recreational use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

**CONCLUSION:** Motorized recreational use of 45 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

#### **IMPACTS ON DEVELOPMENT OF UTILITIES**

No utility lines could be constructed and no corridor would be established.

**CONCLUSION:** Under the All Wilderness Alternative, utilities could not be developed within the WSA.

#### **IMPACTS ON EXISTING MATERIAL SITE RIGHTS-OF-WAY**

The Nevada Department of Transportation would be able to use any or all of their existing material sites at their discretion subject to mitigation required as part of the desert tortoise habitat categorization process.

**CONCLUSION:** No impact to existing material site rights-of-way.

#### **IMPACTS ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

Wilderness designation would enhance the preservation of Category I desert habitat by eliminating the habitat losses projected to occur as a result of utility development and motorized vehicle use. However, 320 acres of Category I habitat would still be lost due to sand and gravel extraction on material sites. This is a three percent loss of Category I habitat. Mitigating measures such as fencing and relocation (Chapter 2) could lessen impacts to individual animals but the 320 acres of habitat would be severely impacted.

**CONCLUSION:** 320 acres of Category I habitat would be lost due to the extraction of sand and gravel from existing material sites.

## FISH AND WILDLIFE NO. 2 (NV-050-216)

### PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness/No Action Alternative)

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 17,242 acres area as nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-6).

### IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES

#### Naturalness

The projected designation of a 1 mile wide utility corridor would allow the development of above ground utilities extending the 11 mile length of the WSA. Construction projections of five transmission lines and one access road would result in the removal of vegetation and the disruption of soils. This activity would physically disturb an estimated 385 acres within the WSA. The placement of towers and transmission lines across the landscape would result in a modified landform, detracting from the natural character of the entire 17,242 acres because of the open terrain where they are to be constructed.

Motorized recreational use such as off-road driving, vehicle camping and sightseeing would continue within the WSA under the Proposed Action. A large portion of the study area consists of an open bajada, readily accessible to vehicles. The construction of access roads associated with the projected development of new utilities would increase accessibility into the WSA for motorized vehicles. The newly created tracks and ways from increased off-road activity would physically disturb an estimated 15 acres within the WSA. Motorized recreational use is projected to increase from an estimated 75 to 125 visits annually.

The construction of two bighorn sheep water developments within the WSA would have a negligible effect on the area's natural character, as the placement and design of each catchment would blend into the landscape and only be recognizable from their immediate vicinity.

#### Solitude and Primitive Recreation

Under the Proposed Action, outstanding opportunities for solitude within the WSA would deteriorate and in some instance be lost as a result of the unnatural sights and sounds created by the continuing use of heavy equipment for the construction and maintenance of the proposed utilities and associated access routes, and by motorized recreational vehicles. Increased motorized activity would also contribute to the diminishing opportunities for solitude within the WSA.

The aforementioned activities would further diminish opportunities for primitive (non-motorized) recreation within the WSA. Under the Proposed Action, visitors would be less inclined to frequent the area for hiking, rock collecting and sightseeing. Primitive recreational use within the WSA is projected to increase from an estimated 15 to 25 visits annually.

#### Special Features

The desert tortoise is a special feature in this WSA. Impacts on the desert tortoise and its habitat are discussed under the topic Impacts to Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise.

**CONCLUSION:** Projected development of utilities, motorized recreational vehicle use, extraction of sand and gravel and mineral exploration are projected to physically disturb an estimated 400 acres. The visual perception of naturalness would be impaired on the entire WSA. Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation within the entire WSA would be diminished and, in some instances lost due to audio and visual distractions.

### IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE

Under the Proposed Action, motorized recreational use would continue within the WSA. Motorized recreational uses are projected to increase from an estimated 75 to 125 visits annually. The majority of the use would occur along the eastern boundary of the WSA, where the projected access roads would be

constructed. The WSA provides opportunities for motorized access for hunting and trapping, dirt-biking, off-road driving and limited vehicle camping.

**CONCLUSION:** Motorized recreational use would increase under the Proposed Action. No adverse impacts to this use is expected to occur.

#### **IMPACTS ON DEVELOPMENT OF UTILITIES**

A total of five transmission lines would be developed in the WSA. Mitigation measures (see Chapter 2) designed to protect desert tortoises and their habitat would affect site specific line location and access. However, four buried utility lines, two gas and two fiber optic, discussed in the draft EIS would not be developed because of mitigating measures and restrictions required for the protection of Category I desert tortoise habitat.

**CONCLUSION:** The proposed action would allow the development of five transmission lines in the WSA, however, four buried utility lines would not be developed because of unacceptable impacts on desert tortoise in Category I habitat.

#### **IMPACTS ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

The 11,007 acres of crucial desert tortoise habitat within the WSA would not receive the added protection afforded from wilderness designation but would be intensively managed to protect desert tortoise habitat under a projected Category I tortoise habitat designation. Even with the implementation of the mitigating measures described in Chapter 2, there will be a loss of 400 acres of desert tortoise habitat due to the construction of five 500 kv powerlines and motorized recreational vehicle use. This amounts to a loss of four percent of the WSA's Category I desert tortoise habitat. While replacement habitat could be provided outside of the WSA as a mitigating measure, the loss of habitat within the WSA would occur.

The draft EIS projected the construction of four buried utility lines in addition to the current projection of five electrical transmission lines. The impact of these lines would be to fragment the tortoise habitat and increase the loss of habitat dramatically. As a result of the disturbance associated with construction of four lineal underground lines and the access routes that would result, the loss of habitat would increase from 400 to 4,300 acres. The habitat would be fragmented in two ways: 1) three narrow strips 11 miles long would be created in-between the four buried lines and 2) the habitat would be fragmented into two areas - one east of the utility corridor and one west of the utility corridor. This greater loss of habitat is inconsistent with the management goals associated with the projected Category I habitat designation and therefore the four buried lines are no longer projected for construction.

**CONCLUSION:** 400 acres of Category I desert tortoise habitat would be lost due to utility development and motorized recreational use.

#### **ADVERSE IMPACTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED**

The unavoidable adverse impacts would be the loss of wilderness values on all 11,007 acres and the loss of 400 acres of crucial desert tortoise habitat as a result of utility line construction and motorized recreational use.

#### **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY**

All present short-term uses could continue. Current projections reduce the amount of desert tortoise habitat in the future (long-term) by four percent. It will take years of future study to correlate the long-term impact this loss of habitat will have on tortoise populations.

#### **IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES**

The projected actions would result in the irreversible and irretrievable commitment (loss) of 11,007 acres containing wilderness values and 400 acres of crucial desert tortoise habitat due to the permanent alteration of the area as a result of electrical transmission line construction.

## **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

All 17,242 acres of public land in the Fish and Wildlife No. 2 WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-7).

### **IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES**

#### **Naturalness**

Naturalness values would be enhanced by the closure of the WSA to motorized recreational vehicles halting the formation of new tracks and ways associated with repeated cross county and off-road vehicle use.

Preclusion of the development of utilities would benefit the wilderness value of naturalness.

No range developments or wildlife habitat projects are located within the WSA. The construction of two bighorn sheep water developments within the WSA would have a negligible effect on the area's natural character, as the placement and design of each catchment would blend into the landscape and only be recognizable from their immediate vicinity. Maintenance of the developments would be done by hand.

#### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation**

The outstanding opportunities for solitude that exist within the central portion of the WSA would be retained. Visitors would utilize this portion of the WSA as it offers the best opportunities for hiking, nature study and photography. Primitive recreational (non-motorized) use within the WSA is projected to increase from an estimated 15 to 50 visits annually.

#### **Special Features**

Wilderness designation would enhance the protection and preservation of desert tortoise by precluding activities such as the development of utilities and cross country vehicle use.

**CONCLUSION:** Designating the WSA as wilderness would preserve wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities that exist for solitude, and would enhance the protection of desert tortoise.

### **IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE**

Wilderness designation would close the 17,242 acre Fish and Wildlife No. 2 WSA to all forms of motorized recreational use. Approximately 75 visits annually of motorized recreational use, including off-road driving, motorized access for hunting and trapping, and vehicle camping, would be eliminated from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for motorized recreational use is located throughout the region; therefore, motorized recreational use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

**CONCLUSION:** Motorized recreational use of 75 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

### **IMPACTS ON DEVELOPMENT OF UTILITIES**

No utility lines could be constructed and no corridor would be established.

**CONCLUSION:** Under the All Wilderness Alternative, utilities could not be developed.

### **IMPACTS ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

Wilderness designation would enhance the preservation of Category I desert tortoise habitat by eliminating the habitat losses projected to occur as a result of utility development and motorized vehicle use.

**CONCLUSION:** Category I desert tortoise habitat would be preserved within the WSA.

## FISH AND WILDLIFE NO. 3 (NV-050-217)

### PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE)

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 22,002 acre area as nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-8).

#### IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES

##### Naturalness

Under the Proposed Action, the extraction of sand and gravel from the material site right-of-way would physically disturb 40 acres within the WSA.

The projected designation of a 1 mile wide utility corridor would allow the development of above ground utilities extending the 18 mile length of the WSA. Construction projections of five transmission lines and one access road would result in the removal of vegetation and the disruption of soils. This activity would physically disturb an estimated 630 acres within the WSA. The placement of towers and transmission lines across the landscape would result in a modified landform, detracting from the natural character of the entire area because of the open terrain where they are to be constructed.

Motorized recreational use such as off-road driving, vehicle camping and sightseeing would continue within the WSA. The study area's terrain consists of an open bajada that is readily accessible to vehicles. The construction of access roads associated with the projected development of new utilities would increase accessibility into the WSA for motorized vehicles. The newly created tracks and ways from increased off-road activity would physically disturb an estimated 26 acres within the WSA. Motorized recreational use is projected to increase from an estimated 60 to 105 visits annually.

##### Solitude and Primitive Recreation

Under the Proposed Action, outstanding opportunities for solitude within the WSA would be lost as a result of the unnatural sights and sounds created by the continuing use of heavy equipment for the construction and maintenance of the proposed utilities and associated access routes and by motorized recreational vehicles. In addition, there would be continued use of heavy motorized vehicles to extract sand and gravel from the existing and two projected material sites. Increased motorized activity would also contribute to the loss in opportunities for solitude within the WSA.

The aforementioned activities would further diminish opportunities for primitive (non-motorized) recreation within the WSA. Under the Proposed Action, visitors would be less inclined to frequent the area for hiking, rock collecting and sightseeing. Primitive recreational use within the WSA is projected to increase from an estimated 10 to 15 visits annually.

##### Special Features

The desert tortoise is a special feature in this WSA. Impacts on the desert tortoise and its habitat are discussed under the topic Impacts to Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise.

One variety of penstemon (Penstemon bicolor ssp. roseus) has been identified at three separate locales within the WSA. One location is along the area's eastern border and the two other sites are located along the extreme western border. This is a sensitive species currently listed on the "Federal Register of Threatened and Endangered Species", as Category 2 (Watch).

The site along the WSA's eastern border would be in direct conflict with the projected utility development. Prior to development, measures would be taken to mitigate any surface disturbance so as to protect the plant.

**CONCLUSION:** Projected development of utilities, motorized recreational vehicle use, extraction of sand and gravel and mineral exploration are projected to physically disturb an estimated 696



acres. The visual perception of naturalness would be impaired on the entire WSA. Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation within the entire WSA would be diminished and, in some instances lost due to audio and visual distractions.

#### **IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE**

Under the Proposed Action, motorized recreational use would continue within the WSA. Motorized recreational uses are projected to increase from an estimated 60 to 105 visits annually. The majority of the use would occur along the eastern boundary of the WSA, where the projected access roads would be constructed. The WSA provides opportunities for motorized hunting and trapping access, dirt-biking, off-road driving and limited vehicle camping.

**CONCLUSION:** Motorized recreational use would benefit under the Proposed Action. No adverse impacts to this use is expected to occur.

#### **IMPACTS ON DEVELOPMENT OF UTILITIES**

A total of five transmission lines would be developed in the WSA. Mitigation measures (see Chapter 2) designed to protect desert tortoises and their habitat would affect site specific line location and access. However, four buried utility lines, two gas and two fiber optic, discussed in the draft EIS would not be developed because of mitigating measures and restrictions required for the protection of Category I desert tortoise habitat.

The location of a penstemon site (see Special Features) within the probable utility corridor will require special mitigation. At a minimum, site specific population studies will be required to map the extent of the plant's habitat and a recovery/reclamation plan and environmental analysis will have to be completed to assess the impacts. Location of transmission towers and related facilities could be affected.

**CONCLUSION:** The proposed action would allow the development of five transmission lines in the WSA. Four buried utility lines would not be developed because of unacceptable impacts on desert tortoise in Category I habitat. Special consideration would be given to the penstemon population.

#### **IMPACTS ON EXISTING MATERIAL SITE RIGHT-OF-WAY**

The Nevada Department of Transportation would be able to use any or all of the existing material site at their discretion subject to mitigation required for the desert tortoise. Two additional projected material sites would not be developed due to restricted management of desert tortoise habitat.

**CONCLUSION:** No impact to the existing material site right-of-way.

#### **IMPACTS ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

The 19,812 acres of crucial desert tortoise habitat within the WSA would not receive the added protection afforded from wilderness designation but would be intensively managed to protect desert tortoise habitat under a projected Category I tortoise habitat designation. Even with the implementation of the mitigating measures described in Chapter 2, there will be a loss of 696 acres of desert tortoise habitat due to the construction of five 500 kv powerlines, removal of sand and gravel and motorized recreational vehicle use. This amounts to a loss of four percent of the WSA's Category I desert tortoise habitat. While replacement habitat could be provided outside of the WSA as a mitigating measure, the loss of habitat within the WSA would occur.

The draft EIS projected the construction of four buried utility lines in addition to the current projection of five electrical transmission lines. The impact of these lines would be to fragment the tortoise habitat and increase the loss of habitat dramatically. As a result of the disturbance associated with construction of four lineal underground lines and the access routes that would result, the loss of habitat would increase from 696 to 6,863 acres. The habitat would be fragmented in two ways: 1) three narrow strips 18 miles long would be created in-between the four buried lines and 2) the habitat would be fragmented into two areas - one east

of the utility corridor and one west of the utility corridor. This greater loss of habitat is inconsistent with the management goals associated with the projected Category I habitat designation and therefore the four buried lines are no longer projected for construction.

**CONCLUSION:** 696 acres of Category I desert tortoise habitat would be lost due to utility development, sand and gravel extraction and motorized recreational use.

#### **ADVERSE IMPACTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED**

The unavoidable adverse impacts would be the loss of wilderness values on all 22,002 acres and the loss of 696 acres of crucial desert tortoise habitat as a result of utility line construction, sand and gravel extraction and motorized recreational use.

#### **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY**

All present short-term uses could continue. Current projections reduce the amount of desert tortoise habitat in the future (long-term) by four percent. It will take years of future study to correlate the long-term impact this loss of habitat will have on tortoise populations.

#### **IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES**

The projected actions would result in the irreversible and irretrievable commitment (loss) of 22,002 acres containing wilderness values and 696 acres of crucial desert tortoise habitat due to the permanent alteration of the area as a result of electrical transmission line construction and sand and gravel extraction.

#### **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, 22,002 acres of public land in the Fish and Wildlife No. 3 WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation. (Map 2-9).

#### **IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES**

##### **Naturalness**

Naturalness values would be enhanced by the closure of the WSA to motorized recreational vehicles, thus preventing a projected 105 visits of motorized recreational use from occurring annually within the study area. This action would halt the formation of new tracks and ways associated with repeated cross county and off-road vehicle use. However, unauthorized off-road driving is projected to occur intermittently along the WSA's eastern boundary causing 10 acres of surface disturbance.

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, access to and the extraction of sand and gravel from one existing material site located within the central portion of the WSA would physically disturb 40 acres. As the right-of-way for the site was issued in perpetuity to the Nevada Department of Transportation and constitutes a valid existing right, full utilization of the site is projected.

Naturalness would benefit from the withdrawal of the area to any potential mineral exploration and the preclusion of the projected development of utilities.

##### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation**

The outstanding opportunities for solitude that exist within the WSA would be retained. Visitors would utilize the WSA occasionally for hiking, nature study and photography. Primitive recreational (non-motorized) use within the WSA is projected to increase from an estimated 10 to 30 visits annually.

##### **Special Features**

The desert tortoise is a special feature in this WSA. Impacts on the desert tortoise and its habitat are discussed under the topic Impacts to Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise.

One variety of penstemon (Penstemon bicolor ssp. roseus) has been identified at three separate locales within the WSA. One location is along the area's eastern border and the two other sites are located along the extreme western border. This is a sensitive species currently listed on the "Federal Register of



Threatened and Endangered Species", as Category 2 (Watch). Wilderness designation would enhance the protection of this plant.

**CONCLUSION:** Designating the WSA as wilderness would preserve wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities that exist for solitude, and would enhance the protection of desert tortoise and the sensitive plant. Activities related to the authorized extraction of sand and gravel and unauthorized vehicle use would impair naturalness qualities over approximately 50 acres of the WSA. Special features would be afforded added protection from wilderness designation.

#### **IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE**

Wilderness designation would close the 22,002 acre Fish and Wildlife No. 3 WSA to all forms of motorized recreational use. Approximately 60 visits annually of motorized recreational use, including off-road driving, motorized access for hunting and vehicle camping, would be eliminated from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for motorized recreational use is located throughout the region; therefore, motorized recreational use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

**CONCLUSION:** Motorized recreational use of 60 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

#### **IMPACTS ON DEVELOPMENT OF UTILITIES**

No utility lines could be constructed and no corridor would be established.

**CONCLUSION:** Under the All Wilderness Alternative, utilities could not be developed.

#### **IMPACTS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF MATERIAL SITES**

Under the All Wilderness Alternative the existing material site right-of-way for sand and gravel would be utilized by the Nevada Department of Transportation. The material site, encompassing 40 acres, was issued prior to 1976, thereby, ensuring its use in perpetuity. The issuance of new rights-of-way for the development of two projected material sites would not be allowed under wilderness designation. Public land that offers potential material sites for sand and gravel are located throughout the region; therefore, the material sites foregone in the WSA could be developed on surrounding public lands. The impacts of shifting this type of development to other public lands would be negligible.

**CONCLUSION:** Full utilization of the one existing material site within the WSA would occur under perpetuity. The two material sites foregone could be developed on surrounding public lands. The impacts of shifting the development of the material sites would be negligible.

#### **IMPACTS ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

Wilderness designation would enhance the preservation of Category I desert tortoise habitat by eliminating the habitat losses projected to occur as a result of utility development and limiting habitat loss due to material site development and motorized vehicle use to 50 acres..

**CONCLUSION:** Category I desert tortoise habitat would be preserved within the WSA except for an estimated 50 acres which would be lost within the WSA as vegetation and soils are removed during the authorized extraction of sand and gravel and unauthorized use of off-road recreational vehicles.

## LIME CANYON WSA (NV-050-231)

### PROPOSED ACTION (PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE)

The Proposed Action recommends 13,895 acres suitable for wilderness designation and 20,785 acres nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-10).

#### IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES

##### Naturalness (Suitable Portion)

The 13,895 acre area recommended suitable would be closed to motorized recreational use, eliminating 30 visits of motorized recreational use estimated to occur annually within this portion of the WSA. This would improve the naturalness values within those areas of the recommended suitable portion that are accessible to motorized vehicles. However, occasional unauthorized motorized vehicle use is foreseen along the southern border of the suitable area. The compaction and removal of vegetation and soils resulting from this use would slowly deteriorate an estimated 5 acres within the recommended suitable area. This would have a negligible effect on the natural character of the area.

The perception of naturalness within the eastern portion of the recommended suitable area (approximately 980 acres) would be negatively impacted by the projected mineral activity occurring in the adjacent nonsuitable area. The extraction of minerals from the patented mining claims and public lands located within the recommended nonsuitable area would diminish the natural and pristine scenic vistas along the eastern border of the recommended suitable portion.

The construction of two bighorn sheep water developments within the recommended suitable area would have a negligible effect on the area's natural character, as the placement and design of the tanks would blend into the landscape and only be recognizable from their immediate vicinity.

No other surface disturbing activities are projected to occur within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA.

##### Naturalness (Nonsuitable Portion)

Under the Proposed Action, motorized recreational use would continue along the roads, ways and washes located within the 20,785 acres of the WSA recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation. This would include 12.7 miles of existing ways and 11 miles of new roads projected for mineral and oil and gas exploration and development. Increased accessibility and use within the WSA from off-road vehicles would create two-track routes within the area. Repeated use of these tracks would remove vegetation and compact soils, disturbing an estimated 35 acres within the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA. Cross country, off-road recreational use is projected to increase from 150 to 230 visits per year within the recommended nonsuitable area.

Surface disturbance associated with the development of two gypsum mines (extensions of mines developed on the patented mining claims) would physically disturb an estimated 620 acres within the nonsuitable area. The blading of 10 miles of new roads, construction of auxiliary facilities and shops and the extraction of minerals would result in the removal of vegetation and soils, scarifying the landscape.

The projected drilling of one exploratory well would take place within the east-central portion of the recommended nonsuitable area. The projected activity would physically disturb 4.5 acres as vegetation and topsoil are removed during the construction of 1 mile of access road and well pads.

The scars left on the landscape by the mining activity and the oil and gas exploration would visually impair the natural character of the entire recommended nonsuitable area.

The construction of one bighorn sheep water development within the recommended nonsuitable area would have a negligible effect on the area's natural character, as the placement and design of the tanks would

blend into the landscape and only be recognizable from their immediate vicinity.

#### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation (Suitable Portion)**

Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be available within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA. These values however, would be diminished along the eastern and southern borders (approximately 985 acres) as a result of the noise and visual disturbance from projected mining activity and unauthorized motorized recreational use occurring on adjacent public and private lands.

The scenic and geologic qualities of Lime Canyon and the rugged western landscape would be preserved. This terrain would also provide visitors with areas of seclusion and scenic camp sites, as well as opportunities to view wildlife and study unusual geologic features. Primitive recreational (non-motorized) use within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA is projected to increase from an estimated 40 to 170 visits annually.

#### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation (Nonsuitable Portion)**

The noise and visual disturbance created by motorized recreational use, projected mineral development, and oil and gas exploration would destroy the outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation available within the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA. These activities would reduce, and in some instances, eliminate areas that provide opportunities for seclusion and solitude. The sights and sounds of ongoing mining activity, i.e. day to day hauling of ore and heavy equipment use, would continue through the life of the mine (approximately 10 to 15 years).

The ongoing maintenance of existing and projected range improvements and wildlife developments within the WSA would detract from the feeling of solitude during the time maintenance was performed. This is normally of short duration and is infrequent (usually once a year).

Outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation would be lost within the nonsuitable area. The physical scars left on the landscape as a result of mineral extraction would permanently void the area of any scenic or photographic qualities. The nonsuitable portion would provide hikers and backpackers with few interesting or scenic destinations or points of interest. Opportunities to view wildlife would be reduced because of increased motorized activity. Campsites would be eliminated as the projected mineral development encroaches upon the most available and appealing areas. Primitive recreational use within the recommended nonsuitable area is projected to slowly increase from an estimated 25 to 35 visits annually.

#### **Special Features**

Several special features exist within the WSA. Lime Canyon and Lime Ridge render unique scenic, geological and possible cultural values.

One plant and one animal species, currently listed on the "Federal Register of Threatened and Endangered Species" as Category 2 (Watch), have been identified within the WSA. The golden bear poppy (*Arctomecon californica*) has been located in an area along the WSA's eastern boundary road. A gila monster (*Heloderma suspectum*) was sighted on Lime Ridge in 1980.

The desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) may occur within the WSA but the closest area categorized as desert tortoise habitat is several miles northeast of the WSA. No categorized desert tortoise habitat (I, II or III) occurs within the WSA (Map 3-19).

Motorized recreational use occurring near the nonsuitable area's eastern boundary could negatively impact the golden bear poppy. The mineral resource activities projected to occur along Lime Ridge would degrade geological and scenic values and could negatively impact the gila monster, which has been identified to occur within this portion of the WSA. Prior to mineral development, measures would be taken to mitigate any surface disturbance so as to protect these special features.

**CONCLUSION:** Wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude and

primitive recreation and the special geological value of Lime Canyon would be retained within 12,905 of the 13,895 acres of the recommended suitable portion. Wilderness values on the remaining 985 acres of the suitable area would be diminished and, in some instances lost, due to the influence of the projected gypsum mining occurring on adjacent public and private lands and occasional unauthorized cross country vehicle use. There would be a loss of wilderness values on the 20,785 acres recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation as continued and increasing cross country recreational vehicle use, projected mineral development, and oil and gas exploration would negatively impact wilderness values. Special features would be afforded some protection through mitigative measures and the implementation of future management actions.

#### **IMPACTS ON EXPLORATION FOR AND DEVELOPMENT OF NON-ENERGY MINERAL RESOURCES**

All lands within the 13,895 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of gypsum resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration for and/or development of gypsum within this portion of the WSA is not projected, as the potential resource would be more accessible within the nonsuitable area.

All lands within the 20,785 acres recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open to mineral entry. All potential mineral resources would be available for exploration and development. This includes approximately 20,785 acres having moderate favorability for the occurrence of nonmetallic mineral resources. Two gypsum mines are projected for development within the recommended nonsuitable area. Processing facilities would be located outside the WSA. No adverse impacts to mineral exploration and development are projected to occur.

**CONCLUSION:** Exploration and development of gypsum resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA. However, no mineral exploration or development of these lands is projected. The development of two gypsum mines are projected to occur within the recommended unsuitable portion of the WSA.

#### **IMPACTS ON THE LEVEL OF EXPLORATION FOR OIL AND GAS**

All lands within the 13,895 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from oil and gas leasing. Included are 13,895 acres having low favorability for the occurrence of energy resources. Exploration for oil and gas within this portion of the WSA is not projected because of the low potential for the resource.

All lands within the 20,785 acres recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open for oil and gas exploration. These lands have a low favorability for the occurrence of energy resources.

One exploratory well is projected to be drilled along the nonsuitable area's eastern boundary based on current energy exploration activity occurring outside this WSA. However, production is not projected because of the area's low favorability.

No other energy exploration is projected to occur within the WSA.

**CONCLUSION:** Exploration of potential oil and gas resources would be foregone within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA. However, neither is projected to occur. The exploration of one well is projected within the nonsuitable area; production is not expected. There would be no impacts on the exploration of potential energy resources within the WSA under the Proposed Action.

#### **IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE**

Wilderness designation would close 13,895 acres of the WSA recommended suitable to motorized recreational use, eliminating approximately 40 visits of motorized recreational use annually. Public land offering similar opportunities for motorized recreational use is located throughout the region. Therefore,

motorized recreational use foregone would be absorbed within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA and on surrounding public lands. The impact of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Under the Proposed Action, motorized recreational use would continue within the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA. Motorized recreational uses are projected to increase from an estimated 150 to 230 visits annually. The majority of the use would occur within the eastern portion of the nonsuitable area, where the terrain is more conducive to this use and where the projected access roads would be constructed. The WSA provides opportunities for motorized hunting and trapping access, off-road driving and limited vehicle camping.

**CONCLUSION:** Motorized recreational use would be eliminated on the 13,895 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation and approximately 40 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

#### **IMPACTS ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

The extent (if any) of desert tortoise habitat in the WSA is unknown. The draft EIS indicated that the western edge of the WSA was noncrucial habitat, however, in the more recent (August 1989) categorization of habitat, in response to the emergency endangered species listing, no desert tortoise habitat was categorized within the WSA. Future more site specific population studies may find this area to be desert tortoise habitat since the known tortoise habitat is located a few miles away and the area is below the 4,000 foot tortoise habitat elevational limit. While this alternative would protect the western edge of the area, motorized uses and mineral exploration in the eastern nonsuitable part of area could unknowingly impact tortoise habitat.

**CONCLUSION:** The status of tortoise habitat in the area is unknown. Adverse impacts could unknowingly occur until further population studies are conducted.

#### **ADVERSE IMPACTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED**

Unavoidable adverse impacts would occur to wilderness values on 985 acres of the 13,895 acres recommended suitable because of influences from mining activity occurring on adjacent lands and unauthorized cross country motorized recreational use.

On the 20,785 acres recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation, the unavoidable adverse impacts would be those associated with the loss of wilderness values from increased motorized recreational use, mineral development and oil and gas exploration.

#### **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY**

On 12,900 acres out of the 13,895 acres designated wilderness, the wilderness values would be retained.

On the 20,785 acres recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation, all present uses would continue. Increased cross country motorized recreational use, projected mineral development and oil and gas exploration would reduce wilderness values.

#### **IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES**

Of the 13,895 acres designated wilderness, irretrievable commitments of wilderness resources are expected on approximately 985 acres.

On the 20,785 acres recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation, mineral development would create an irreversible commitment of wilderness resources.

#### **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

All 34,680 acres of public land in the Lime Canyon WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-11).



## IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES

### Naturalness

Naturalness values would be retained by the closure of the WSA to motorized recreational vehicles, thus preventing a projected 260 visits of motorized recreational use from occurring annually within the study area. This action would close existing ways, new roads projected from mineral activity, and would halt the formation of new two-wheel tracks associated with repeated off-road use. However, unauthorized off-road driving is projected to occur intermittently along the WSA's boundary roads. Vegetation and soils would be compacted as a result of this use, disturbing approximately 15 acres within the study area. This would have a negligible effect on the overall naturalness values of the WSA.

Maintenance of existing range improvements (developed springs, reservoir) within the WSA would not change. Maintenance of projected and existing wildlife developments would continue to be done by hand. This would have a negligible effect on naturalness.

Surface disturbance associated with the projected development of two gypsum mines (extensions of mines developed on patented claims) including blading of 6 miles of access roads, construction of shops and auxiliary facilities and extraction of minerals, would physically disturb an estimated 600 acres. Scars left from the mining would be visible throughout the eastern portion of the WSA, impairing the perceived naturalness within approximately 16,800 acres.

### Solitude and Primitive Recreation

Opportunities for solitude and primitive types of recreational pursuits would be diminished and, in some areas lost, within approximately 16,800 acres of the WSA as a result of the noise and visual disturbances created by heavy equipment use and the day to day operation of the projected mines. These disturbances would persist through the life of the mine, approximately 10 to 15 years.

The remaining 17,880 acres within the WSA would retain outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. Visitors to the area would utilize the western half of the WSA where the rugged landscape would shield the sights and sounds of the activities taking place within the study area. The scenic, pristine qualities of Lime Canyon would be retained within this portion of the WSA. Visitors would have opportunities to view wildlife and find isolated places to hike and camp. Hunting would still be a dominant use within the WSA, but where hunters used to drive they would now have to walk into the area. Primitive recreational (non-motorized) use within the WSA is projected to increase from an estimated 60 to 190 visits annually.

### Special Features

Several special features exist within the WSA. Lime Canyon and Lime Ridge render unique scenic, geological and possible cultural values.

One plant and two animal species, currently listed on the "Federal Register of Threatened and Endangered Species" as Category 2 (Watch), have been identified within the WSA. The golden bear poppy (Arctomecon californica) has been located in an areas along the WSA's eastern boundary road. A gila monster (Heloderma suspectum) was sighted on Lime Ridge in 1980.

The desert tortoise (Gopherus agassizii) may occur within the WSA but the closest area categorized as desert tortoise habitat is several miles northeast of the WSA. No categorized desert tortoise habitat (I, II or III) occurs within the WSA (Map 3-19).

Lime Canyon, the golden bear poppy and the desert tortoise population would remain protected under this alternative. They would receive the added protection afforded from wilderness designation.

Mining activities projected to occur within the WSA would degrade the geological and scenic values of Lime Ridge and could threaten the gila monster. Wilderness designation would reduce impacts by requiring tighter restrictions and implementing mitigative measures on authorized surface disturbing activities.

**CONCLUSION:** Designation would preserve wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude, and primitive recreation and the special features of the aforementioned Category 2 "Threatened and Endangered" species and Lime Canyon that exist within 17,880 of the WSA's 34,680 acres. Approximately 615 acres within the WSA would be physically disturbed by the projected activity associated with authorized mining and unauthorized vehicle use. The scarification of topography and the sights and sounds from heavy equipment associated with the mining would negatively impact the natural perception, outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and the scenic features of Lime Ridge within approximately 16,800 acres of the WSA.

**IMPACTS ON EXPLORATION FOR AND DEVELOPMENT OF NON-ENERGY MINERAL RESOURCES**  
The entire WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. This includes 34,680 acres having moderate favorability for the occurrence of nonmetallic mineral resources.

Two gypsum mines (extensions of mines developed on three patented claims) are projected to occur within the WSA. The mining activity would be done in a manner that minimizes impacts to the wilderness resource while protecting the rights of the operator. Mitigation measures would be implemented under the All Wilderness Alternative, resulting in the reduction of road construction and the placement of auxiliary and processing facilities outside the WSA. Mineral development would not be adversely impacted under the All Wilderness Alternative.

**CONCLUSION:** Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. The development of two mines are projected to occur within the WSA under the All Wilderness Alternative. As no other mineral exploration or development within the WSA is projected, impacts to mineral resources would not occur.

#### **IMPACTS ON THE LEVEL OF EXPLORATION FOR OIL AND GAS**

All lands within the WSA would be unavailable for the exploration of energy resources. Included are 34,680 acres having low favorability for the occurrence of energy resources.

**CONCLUSION:** The exploratory drilling of one oil and gas well projected for the WSA would be foregone.

#### **IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE**

Wilderness designation would close the 34,680 acre Lime Canyon WSA to all forms of motorized recreational use. Approximately 180 visits annually of motorized recreational use, including off-road driving, motorized access for hunting and trapping, and vehicle camping, would be eliminated from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for motorized recreational use is located throughout the region; therefore, motorized recreational use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

**CONCLUSION:** Motorized recreational use of 180 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

#### **IMPACTS ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

The extent (if any) of desert tortoise habitat in the WSA is unknown. Wilderness designation would prevent unknowing damage to tortoise habitat. The draft EIS indicated that the western edge of the WSA was noncrucial habitat, however, in the more recent (August 1989) categorization of habitat, in response to the emergency endangered species listing, no desert tortoise habitat was categorized within the WSA. Future more site specific population studies may find this area to be desert tortoise habitat since the known tortoise habitat is located a few miles away and the area is below the 4,000 foot tortoise habitat elevational limit.

**CONCLUSION:** Tortoise habitat which may exist within the area would be protected by wilderness designation.



## **NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE (NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE)**

All 34,680 acres of public land in the Lime Canyon WSA would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-12).

### **IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES**

#### **Naturalness**

Under the No Wilderness Alternative, motorized recreational use would continue along the roads, ways and washes located within the WSA. This would include 12.7 miles of existing ways and 11 miles of new roads projected for mineral and oil and gas exploration and development. Increased accessibility and use within the WSA from off-road vehicles would create two-track routes within the area. Repeated use of these tracks would remove vegetation and compact soils, disturbing an estimated 40 acres within the WSA. Cross country, off-road recreational use is projected to increase from 180 to 260 visits per year within the recommended nonsuitable area.

Surface disturbance associated with the development of two gypsum mines (extensions of mines developed on the patented mining claims) would physically disturb an estimated 620 acres within the WSA. The blading of 10 miles of new roads, construction of auxiliary facilities and shops and the extraction of minerals would result in the removal of vegetation and soils, scarifying the landscape.

The projected drilling of one exploratory well would take place within the east-central portion of the WSA. The projected activity would physically disturb 4.5 acres as vegetation and topsoil are removed during the construction of 1 mile of access road and well pads.

The natural perception within approximately 21,765 acres of the WSA would be visually impacted by the scarification of the topography, modification of the landform and continuous existence of mechanized equipment as a result of the projected mining activities, oil and gas exploration and cross country motorized vehicle use.

The west-central core (approximately 12,915 acres) of the WSA would be protected from surface disturbing activities; mineral and energy exploration and development are not projected to occur in this portion and the area's rugged terrain restricts the use of motorized vehicles. The natural character of this portion of the WSA would be retained under the No Wilderness Alternative.

The construction of three bighorn sheep water developments within the WSA would have a negligible effect on the area's natural character, as the placement and design of each catchment would blend into the landscape and only be recognizable from their immediate vicinity.

#### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation**

Under the No Wilderness Alternative, solitude opportunities within the southwestern, northern, and eastern portions of the WSA (approximately 21,765 acres) would deteriorate, and in some areas, be lost due to the unnatural sights and sounds created by heavy equipment used in projected mineral development and oil and gas exploration. Increased motorized vehicle activity would further diminish opportunities for solitude as they encroach upon isolated washes, outcrops and other secluded locales. Primitive recreational opportunities within this portion of the WSA also would be greatly reduced and in some areas lost to the on going activities. The scarification of the scenic landscape would provide a hiker or backpacker fewer opportunities to view wildlife, obtain scenic photographs and study the area's geologic formations. In addition, these activities would leave few areas for visitors to find interesting or attractive campsites. The primary focal point of the area, Lime Ridge, would lose its appeal for visitors, as a result of the projected mining.

Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be available within the west-central portion (approximately 12,915 acres) of the WSA. Lime Canyon, one of the WSA's major focal points, would be preserved, as no mineral or energy activities are projected to occur in this area. The canyon and rugged landscape of the west-central portion of the WSA would screen many of the sights and sounds of

activities occurring on the public and private lands within the WSA and provide locations for seclusion. Opportunities would exist for hikers, backpackers and photographers to observe wildlife and view limited scenic vistas and geologic features.

Primitive recreational (non-motorized) use would continue throughout the entire WSA. This use is projected to increase from an estimated 60 to 100 visits annually.

No new range improvements or recreation developments or facilities are planned in the WSA. Construction of three bighorn sheep water developments and the maintenance of the fence line, developed spring and reservoir would not adversely affect wilderness values in the WSA.

#### **Special Features**

Several special features exist within the WSA. Lime Canyon and Lime Ridge render unique scenic, geological and possible cultural values.

The desert tortoise (Gopherus agassizii), emergency listed in August 1989 as an endangered species, may occur within the WSA but the closest area categorized as desert tortoise habitat is several miles northeast of the WSA. No categorized desert tortoise habitat (I, II or III) occurs within the WSA (Map 3-19).

One plant and one animal species, currently listed on the "Federal Register of Threatened and Endangered Species" as Category 2 (Watch), have been identified within the WSA. The golden bear poppy (Arctomecon californica) has been located in an area along the WSA's eastern boundary road. A gila monster (Heloderma suspectum) was sighted on Lime Ridge in 1980.

Cross country motorized recreational use occurring near the WSA's eastern boundary could negatively impact the golden bear poppy. The mineral resource activities projected to occur along Lime Ridge would degrade geological and scenic values and could negatively impact the gila monster which has been identified to occur within this portion of the WSA. Prior to mineral development, measures would be taken to mitigate any surface disturbance so as to protect these special features.

Cross country motorized recreational use occurring within the western portion of the WSA could negatively impact desert tortoise directly and indirectly through the destruction of burrows and vegetation. This activity would contribute to a decline in the desert tortoise population of the Gold Butte region.

**CONCLUSION:** The sights, sounds and surface disturbances created by increased cross country motorized recreational use, projected mineral development and oil and gas exploration would contribute to the loss of wilderness values on 21,765 acres of the WSA. Special features would be afforded some protection through mitigative measures and the implementation of future management actions. Wilderness values would be retained within the remaining 12,915 acres of the WSA as no surface disturbing activities are projected to occur.

#### **IMPACTS ON EXPLORATION FOR AND DEVELOPMENT OF NON-ENERGY MINERAL RESOURCES**

All lands within the Lime Canyon WSA would remain open for mineral entry. All potential mineral resources within the WSA would be available for exploration and development. Included are 34,680 acres having moderate favorability for the occurrence of nonmetallic mineral resources. The development of two gypsum mines is projected within the WSA. There would be no impact on the exploration or development of mineral resources.

**CONCLUSION:** Mineral resources within the WSA would be available for exploration and development. The development of two mines for gypsum is projected to occur within the WSA. There are no projected adverse impacts on the exploration for and development of mineral resources.

#### **IMPACTS ON THE LEVEL OF EXPLORATION FOR OIL AND GAS**

All lands within the Lime Canyon WSA would be available for the exploration of energy resources. This includes 34,680 acres having low favorability for the occurrence of energy resources.

The exploratory drilling of one well is projected along the WSA's eastern boundary. Production of the well is not projected to occur. No other energy exploration is projected to occur within the WSA. There are no projected adverse impacts on the exploration for energy resources.

**CONCLUSION:** Oil and gas resources within the WSA would be available for exploration. The drilling of one exploratory well is projected to occur within the WSA. There are no projected adverse impacts on the exploration for energy resources.

#### **IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE**

Motorized recreational use would continue within the WSA under the No Wilderness Alternative. Motorized recreational uses are projected to increase from an estimated 180 to 260 visits annually. The majority of the use would occur within the eastern and southern portions of the WSA. The WSA provides opportunities for motorized hunting and trapping access, off-road driving and limited vehicle camping.

**CONCLUSION:** Motorized recreational use would benefit under the No Wilderness Alternative. No adverse impacts to this use is expected to occur.

#### **IMPACTS ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

The extent (if any) of desert tortoise habitat in the WSA is unknown. The draft EIS indicated that the western edge of the WSA was noncrucial habitat, however, in the more recent (August 1989) categorization of habitat, in response to the emergency endangered species listing, no desert tortoise habitat was categorized within the WSA. Future more site specific population studies may find this area to be desert tortoise habitat since the known tortoise habitat is located a few miles away and the area is below the 4,000 foot tortoise habitat elevational limit. Motorized uses and mineral exploration in the area could unknowingly impact tortoise habitat.

**CONCLUSION:** The status of tortoise habitat in the area is unknown. Adverse impacts could unknowingly occur until further population studies are conducted.

## MILLION HILLS WSA (NV-050-233)

### PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE)

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 21,296 acre area as unsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-13).

#### IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES

##### Naturalness

Under the Proposed Action, motorized recreational use would continue along the roads, ways and washes located within the WSA. This would include 4.8 miles of existing ways and 5.5 miles of new roads associated with mineral and energy exploration. Few natural barriers exist within the northern portion of the WSA that would restrict motorized vehicle use. In addition, the projected 5.5 miles of new roads associated with mineral and energy exploration would increase accessibility for motorized vehicles into the WSA. Increased cross country motorized recreational use within the WSA would create two-track routes across the area. Repeated use of new and existing tracks would remove vegetation and compact soils, disturbing an estimated 35 acres within the WSA. Cross country, off-road recreational use is projected to increase from 150 to 215 visits per year within the WSA.

It is projected that exploration would eventually occur on the existing mining claims located within the central portion of the WSA around Azure Mine. Surface disturbance associated with the mineral exploration would physically disturb an estimated 6.4 acres within the WSA. The blading of 3 miles of roads, construction of drill pads and the trenching for test pits would result in the removal of vegetation and soils, scarifying the landscape. The natural landscape of the area would be disrupted by this activity within the east-central portion of the WSA.

The projected drilling of two exploratory wells within the northern portion of the WSA would clear vegetation and topsoil for the construction of 2.5 miles of access roads and well pads. Approximately 13.5 acres would be physically disturbed due to this activity, resulting in the degradation of the WSA's landscape.

The natural perception within approximately 12,656 acres of the WSA would be visually impacted by the scarification of the topography, modification of the landform and continuous existence of mechanized equipment as a result of projected mineral exploration, oil and gas exploration and cross country motorized recreational use.

The south-central portion (approximately 8,640 acres) of the WSA would not be subjected to surface disturbing activities. Mineral and energy exploration are not projected to occur in this portion and the area's rugged landscape restricts the use of motorized vehicles. The natural character of the core of the WSA would be retained under the Proposed Action.

The construction of three bighorn sheep water developments and an eight mile fence within the WSA would have a negligible effect on the area's natural character, as the projects would be designed and placed so as to blend in with the surrounding terrain.

##### Solitude and Primitive Recreation

Under the Proposed Action, solitude opportunities within the northern three-quarters of the WSA (approximately 12,656 acres) would deteriorate and, in some areas, be lost due to the unnatural sights and sounds created by heavy equipment used in projected mineral and energy exploration. Increased cross country motorized recreational use would further diminish opportunities for solitude as they encroach upon isolated washes, drainages, outcrops, and other secluded locales. The gentle topography and limited vegetative screening within this portion of the WSA would not provide any screening of the increased activities occurring within the area. The increased activity would impair primitive recreational use within this portion of the WSA, thus limiting special locales and points of interest where visitors might experience viewing and photographing wildlife and scenic vistas.

Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be available within the south-central portion (approximately 8,640 acres) of the WSA. The rugged drainages and peaks and scattering of rock outcrops that makeup most of the southern region's landscape would provide numerous secluded areas and screen many of the sights and sounds of activities occurring along the boundary roads and near the area of mineral activity. Opportunities would exist for hikers, backpackers and photographers to observe wildlife and view limited scenic vistas and geologic features.

Primitive recreational (non-motorized) use would continue throughout the entire WSA. This use is projected to increase from an estimated 50 to 90 visits per year.

The construction and maintenance of three bighorn sheep water developments, three fencelines and two developed springs would not adversely affect solitude values in the WSA.

#### **Special Features**

The desert tortoise is a special feature in this WSA. Impacts on the desert tortoise and its habitat are discussed under the topic Impacts to Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise.

The mineral exploration activities projected to occur within the WSA would degrade scenic values within the northern portion of Azure Ridge.

**CONCLUSION:** The sights, sounds and surface disturbances created by increased cross country motorized recreational use, projected mineral and oil and gas exploration would contribute to the loss of wilderness values on 12,656 acres of the WSA. Wilderness values are expected to be retained within the remaining 8,640 acres of the WSA as no surface disturbing activities are anticipated.

#### **IMPACTS ON EXPLORATION FOR AND DEVELOPMENT OF NON-ENERGY MINERAL RESOURCES**

All lands within the Million Hills WSA would remain open for mineral entry and all potential mineral resources would be available for exploration and development. Included are approximately 4,259 acres having moderate favorability for the occurrence of metallic minerals and 21,296 acres having moderate favorability for the occurrence of nonmetallic minerals (Map 3-22).

Eventual exploration of existing claims near the Azure Mine is projected to occur within the central portion of the WSA under the Proposed Action. Development is not projected to occur as a result of exploration. No other mineral exploration or development is projected within the WSA. No adverse impacts are projected.

**CONCLUSION:** Mineral resources within the WSA would be available for exploration and development. The exploration of existing mining claims is projected to occur within the WSA. There are no projected adverse impacts on the exploration for and development of mineral resources.

#### **IMPACTS ON THE LEVEL OF EXPLORATION FOR OIL AND GAS**

All lands within the Million Hills WSA would be available for the exploration of energy resources. Included are 21,296 acres having low favorability for the occurrence of energy resources. The exploratory drilling of two wells is projected within the northern portion of the WSA. Production from the wells is not expected to occur. No other energy exploration is projected to occur within the WSA. Mitigation measures required to protect the desert tortoise (Chapter 2) would impact methods and costs of exploration and development.

**CONCLUSION:** Oil and gas resources within the WSA would be available for exploration. The drilling of two exploratory wells is projected to occur within the WSA. There are no projected adverse impacts on the exploration for oil and gas resources.



#### **IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE**

Motorized recreational use would continue within the WSA. The majority of use would occur along the western boundary and within the north half of the WSA. The WSA provides opportunities for hunting and trapping access, vehicle camping, off-road driving and rockhounding. Motorized recreational use is projected to increase from an estimated 150 to 215 visits annually.

**CONCLUSION:** Motorized recreational use would continue and increase under the Proposed Action.

#### **IMPACTS ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

The 1,800 acres of crucial desert tortoise habitat within the WSA would not receive the added protection afforded from wilderness designation but would be intensively managed to protect desert tortoise habitat under a projected Category I tortoise habitat designation (Desert Tortoise Habitat, Map 3-23). Even with the implementation of the mitigating measures described in Chapter 2, there will be a loss of 20 acres of desert tortoise habitat due to exploration for oil and gas and increased cross country motorized recreational use. This amounts to a loss of one percent of the WSA's Category I desert tortoise habitat. While replacement habitat could be provided outside of the WSA as a mitigating measure, the loss of habitat within the WSA would occur. Additionally, fragmentation of the habitat due to new roads would increase the area of influence and seriously degrade the ability of tortoises to use the affected area in the future.

**CONCLUSION:** 20 acres of Category I desert tortoise habitat would be lost to projected oil and gas exploration activity and increased cross country motorized vehicle use.

#### **ADVERSE IMPACTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED**

The unavoidable adverse impacts would be those associated with the loss of wilderness values on approximately 12,656 acres and the loss of 20 acres of desert tortoise habitat resulting from increased cross country vehicle use, mineral and energy exploration activity.

#### **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY**

Nondesignation of the WSA would allow all present short-term uses to continue. Motorized recreational use and projected mineral and oil and gas exploration would reduce wilderness values and total desert tortoise habitat.

#### **IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES**

The projected actions would result in the irreversible and irretrievable commitment (loss) of wilderness resources on 12,656 acres and Category I desert tortoise habitat in 20 acres because of mining and oil and gas exploration and expanded off-road vehicle use.

#### **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

All 21,296 acres of public land in the Million Hills WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-14).

#### **IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES**

##### **Naturalness**

Naturalness values would be retained by the closure of the WSA to motorized recreational vehicles, thus eliminating a projected 215 visits of motorized recreational use from occurring annually within the study area. This action would close existing ways and would halt the formation of new two-wheel tracks associated with repeated off-road use.

Range improvements and wildlife developments (fence, bighorn sheep water developments) would be designed so as to blend in with the area's natural terrain. These developments would have a negligible effect on naturalness.



### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation**

Solitude opportunities within the WSA would be enhanced under the All Wilderness Alternative. Except for occasional unauthorized use, motorized recreational vehicles would be eliminated from the WSA. Areas of seclusion would be more available to visitors throughout the WSA with the elimination of this use. Secluded spots and isolated locales available in Azure Ridge, the Million Hills, and the New Wash area would be retained.

Opportunities to experience primitive types of recreational activities would be enhanced within the WSA. Visitors to the area would be more inclined to utilize those vicinities of the WSA near the existing ways and the northern region as encounters with motorized vehicles would be reduced. Opportunities to view wildlife would be enhanced by the elimination of cross country motorized recreational use. Primitive recreational use including hiking, backpacking, primitive camping, nature study and hunting is projected to increase from an estimated 50 to 180 visits annually.

Maintenance of existing range improvements (developed springs, fences) within the WSA would not change. Maintenance and construction of projected wildlife developments and range improvements would be done by hand. Construction and maintenance of the projects would be completed in short durations and maintenance would be conducted less than twice a year. This activity would have a negligible effect on solitude.

### **Special Features**

The desert tortoise is a special feature in this WSA. Impacts on the desert tortoise and its habitat are discussed under the topic Impacts to Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise.

Azure Ridge visual resources would receive the added protection afforded from wilderness designation.

**CONCLUSION:** Designation would preserve wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive recreation and the scenic features of Azure Ridge.

### **IMPACTS ON EXPLORATION FOR AND DEVELOPMENT OF NON-ENERGY MINERAL RESOURCES**

The entire 21,296 acre Million Hills WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. Included are approximately 4,259 acres having moderate favorability for the occurrence of metallic minerals and 21,296 acres having moderate favorability for the occurrence of nonmetallic minerals (Map 3-22).

The exploration for base metals (copper, zinc) on existing claims would not take place due to the weak mineralization of the area being unable to support valid claims.

**CONCLUSION:** Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. Mineral exploration activity on existing claims would not occur due to the lack of significant mineralization to support validity examinations. Development of base metal resources is not projected to take place.

### **IMPACTS ON THE LEVEL OF EXPLORATION FOR OIL AND GAS**

All lands within the WSA would be unavailable for the exploration of energy resources. Included are 21,296 acres having low favorability for the occurrence of energy resources. The drilling of two projected oil and gas exploratory wells would be not occur.

**CONCLUSION:** The exploratory drilling of two oil and gas wells projected for the WSA would be foregone.

### **IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE**

Wilderness designation would close the 21,296 acre Million Hills WSA to all forms of motorized recreational use. Approximately 150 visits annually of motorized recreational use, including off-road driving, motorized

access for hunting, trapping and rockhounding, and vehicle camping, would be eliminated from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for motorized recreational use is located throughout the region; therefore, motorized recreational use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

**CONCLUSION:** Motorized recreational use of 150 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

#### **IMPACTS ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

Wilderness designation would enhance the preservation of Category I desert tortoise habitat by eliminating the 20 acre habitat loss projected to occur as a result of oil and gas exploration and increased cross country motorized vehicle use.

**CONCLUSION:** Designation of the WSA would eliminate the loss of 20 acres and enhance the protection of the 1,800 acres of Category I desert tortoise habitat.

#### **ALTERNATIVE A (PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE)**

Under this alternative, 11,050 acres of public land would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 10,246 acres of public land would be recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-15).

##### **IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES**

###### **Naturalness (Suitable Portion)**

The 11,050 acre area recommended suitable would be closed to motorized recreational use, eliminating 75 visits of motorized recreational use estimated to occur annually within this portion of the WSA. This would improve the naturalness values within those areas of the recommended suitable portion that are accessible to motorized vehicles.

The construction of two bighorn sheep water developments and four miles of fence line within the WSA would have a negligible effect on the area's natural character, as the projects would be designed and placed so as to blend in with the surrounding terrain.

###### **Naturalness (Nonsuitable Portion)**

Motorized recreational uses would continue along roads, ways and washes located within the 10,246 acres of the WSA recommended as unsuitable for wilderness designation. This would include 1.8 miles of existing ways and 2.5 miles of new roads projected for oil and gas exploration and development. Increased accessibility and use within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA by off-road vehicles would create two-track routes within the area. Repeated use of these tracks would remove vegetation and compact soils, disturbing an estimated 20 acres within the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA. Cross country, off-road recreational use is projected to increase from 75 to 120 visits per year within the recommended nonsuitable area.

The projected drilling of two exploratory wells would take place within the western and northern portion of the recommended nonsuitable area. The projected activity would physically disturb 13.5 acres as vegetation and topsoil are removed during the construction of 2.5 miles of access road and well pads. This disturbance would add to further degradation of the area's landscape.

The natural perception within the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA would be visually impacted by the scarification of the terrain, modification of the landform and continuous existence of mechanized equipment as a result of projected oil and gas exploration and cross country motorized recreational use.

The construction of one bighorn sheep water development and four miles of fence line within the unsuitable portion of the WSA would have a negligible effect on the area's natural character, as the projects would be designed and placed so as to blend in with the surrounding terrain.

#### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation (Suitable Portion)**

Solitude within the suitable portion would benefit by the curtailment of mineral exploration and development. There would be a positive effect on solitude and primitive recreation by the closure of the suitable area to off-road vehicle use. Only occasional unauthorized use would diminish opportunities for solitude along the boundaries.

The scenic and geologic qualities of Azure Ridge and other portions of the suitable area's rugged landscape would be preserved. The area would provide visitors with seclusion, campsites and a variety of locations for hunting. Primitive recreational (non-motorized) use within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA is projected to increase from an estimated 35 to 150 visits annually.

Maintenance of existing range improvements (developed springs, fences) within the WSA would not change. Maintenance and construction of projected wildlife developments and range improvements would be done by hand. Construction and maintenance of the projects would be completed in short durations and maintenance would be conducted less than twice a year. These activities would have a negligible effect on solitude.

#### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation (Nonsuitable Portion)**

Solitude and primitive recreation in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would be adversely affected by the disturbance from heavy equipment use and day to day activities from oil and gas exploration. Off-road motorized recreational use would also detract from the feeling of solitude within the nonsuitable area.

The recommended nonsuitable area would still provide hunters with choice locations for upland game bird hunting. Hikers and backpackers would be less likely to frequent the area as few points of interest or scenic locales exist within this portion of the WSA. Continued and increasing cross country recreational use would make the area even less desirable for these users. Primitive recreational use within this area is projected to increase from an estimated 15 to 30 visits annually.

#### **Special Features**

The desert tortoise is a special feature in this WSA. Impacts on the desert tortoise and its habitat are discussed under the topic Impacts to Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise.

The geologic and scenic values of Azure Ridge would be retained under Alternative A.

**CONCLUSION:** Wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation and the geologically scenic Azure Ridge, would be retained within the 11,050 acre area recommended suitable. There would be a loss of wilderness values on the 10,246 acres recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation as continued and increasing cross country motorized recreational use and the projected exploration of oil and gas would negatively impact the area.

#### **IMPACTS ON EXPLORATION FOR AND DEVELOPMENT OF NON-ENERGY MINERAL RESOURCES**

The 11,050 acres of the recommended suitable portion of the WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. Included are approximately 1,215 acres having moderate favorability for the occurrence of metallic minerals and 11,050 acres having moderate favorability for the occurrence of nonmetallic minerals (Map 3-22).

The exploration for base metals (copper, zinc) projected to occur without wilderness designation would not take place under Alternative A due to the weak mineralization of the area being unable to support valid claims.

All lands within the 10,246 acres recommended nonsuitable for wilderness would remain open for mineral

entry. Included are approximately 3,044 acres having moderate favorability for the occurrence of metallic minerals and 10,246 acres having moderate favorability for the occurrence of nonmetallic minerals. All potential mineral resources within the WSA would be available for exploration and development. However, exploration and/or development of potential resources within this portion of the WSA is not projected.

**CONCLUSION:** Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA. Mineral exploration activity projected to occur without wilderness designation would not occur due to the lack of valid claims if designation occurs. Development of base metal resources is not projected to take place within either the recommended suitable or unsuitable areas.

#### **IMPACTS ON THE LEVEL OF EXPLORATION FOR OIL AND GAS**

All lands within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA would be unavailable for the exploration of energy resources. Included are 11,050 acres having low favorability for the occurrence of energy resources.

All lands within the 10,246 acres recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open for energy exploration and development. Included are 10,246 acres having a low favorability for the occurrence of energy resources. Potential energy resources within this portion of the WSA would be available for exploration.

The exploratory drilling of two wells is projected within the recommended unsuitable area. Production from the wells is not projected to occur. No other energy exploration is projected to occur within the area. There are no projected adverse impacts on the exploration for potential oil and gas resources. Mitigation measures required to protect the desert tortoise (Chapter 2) would impact methods and costs of exploration and development.

**CONCLUSION:** Lands within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA would be unavailable for energy exploration. However, no oil and gas exploration is projected to occur within this portion of the WSA. The drilling of two exploratory wells is projected to occur within the recommended unsuitable area. No adverse impact to oil and gas exploration is projected to occur. Production from the wells is not expected.

#### **IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE**

Wilderness designation would close 11,050 acres of the WSA recommended suitable to motorized recreational use, eliminating approximately 75 visits of motorized recreational use annually. Public land offering similar opportunities for motorized recreational use is located throughout the region. Therefore, motorized recreational use foregone would be absorbed within the unsuitable portion of the WSA and on surrounding public lands. The impact of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible. Under Alternative A, motorized recreational use would continue within the recommended unsuitable portion of the WSA. Motorized recreational uses are projected to increase from an estimated 75 to 120 visits annually. The majority of the use would occur within the northern portion of the unsuitable area, where the projected access roads would be constructed. The WSA provides opportunities for motorized hunting and trapping access, off-road driving and limited vehicle camping.

**CONCLUSION:** Motorized recreational use would be eliminated on the 11,050 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation and approximately 75 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

#### **IMPACTS ON THE SPECIES DESERT TORTOISE**

The 1,800 acres of crucial desert tortoise habitat within the WSA would not receive the added protection afforded from wilderness designation but would be intensively managed to protect desert tortoise habitat under a projected Category I tortoise habitat designation (Desert Tortoise Habitat, Map 3-23). Even with the implementation of the mitigating measures described in Chapter 2, there will be a loss of 20 acres of desert tortoise habitat due to exploration for oil and gas and increased cross country motorized recreational

use. This amounts to a loss of one percent of the WSA's Category I desert tortoise habitat. While replacement habitat could be provided outside of the WSA as a mitigating measure, the loss of habitat within the WSA would occur. Additionally, fragmentation of the habitat due to new roads would increase the area of influence and seriously degrade the ability of tortoises to use the affected area in the future.

**CONCLUSION:** 20 acres of Category I desert tortoise habitat would be lost to projected oil and gas exploration activity and increased cross country motorized vehicle use.





## **GARRETT BUTTES WSA (NV-050-235)**

### **PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE)**

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 11,835 acre area as nonsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-16).

#### **IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES**

##### **Naturalness**

Under the Proposed Action, motorized recreational use would continue along the roads, ways and washes located within the WSA. This would include 4.9 miles of existing ways. The study area consists of numerous wide sandy washes and flat open regions that are readily accessible to vehicles. Very few natural barriers within these portions of the WSA restrict motorized vehicle access. Increased cross country motorized recreational use within the WSA would adversely impact the natural character of the area by creating new trails, compacting soils and vegetation. Motorized recreational use is projected to increase from an estimated 180 to 255 visits annually.

##### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation**

The continued use of motorized vehicles on the existing ways and off-road throughout the WSA would diminish solitude opportunities within the WSA. The few secluded locales that exist within the WSA providing solitude would become susceptible to increasing motorized recreational vehicle use.

The ongoing maintenance of existing range improvements and wildlife developments within the WSA would detract from the feeling of solitude during the time maintenance was being performed. This is normally of short duration and is infrequent (less than twice per year).

The area would provide less than outstanding opportunities for limited types of primitive recreational activities, such as hiking, horseback riding and hunting. Primitive recreational (non-motorized) use is projected to increase from 50 to 65 visits annually.

##### **Special Features**

The desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) may occur within the WSA. The population which inhabits the Gold Butte geographical area is of the same genetic identity as the Beaver Dam Slope population (Federally listed as "Threatened"). The WSA is currently un categorized desert tortoise habitat. (Desert Tortoise Habitat, Map 3-27).

Cross country motorized recreational use occurring within the WSA would negatively impact desert tortoise directly and indirectly through the destruction of burrows and vegetation. This activity would contribute to a decline in the desert tortoise population of the Gold Butte region.

Appropriate protection is foreseen for the desert tortoise as a result of future management actions implemented by the categorization of habitat within the WSA. Upon categorization of the habitat, either management practices would be adopted, or steps taken to mitigate impacts in order to appropriately manage the tortoise population.

**CONCLUSION:** Wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude and special features would be diminished and, in some instances, lost due to the sights, sounds and surface disturbances created by continued and the projected increase in motorized recreational use within the WSA. Special features would be afforded some protection through mitigative measures and the implementation of future management actions.

#### **IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE**

Motorized recreational uses would continue within the WSA under the Proposed Action. Motorized recreational uses are projected to increase from an estimated 180 to 255 visits annually. The majority of



the use would occur within the central portion of the WSA. The WSA provides opportunities for motorized hunting and trapping access, dirt-biking, off-road driving and limited vehicle camping.

**CONCLUSION:** Motorized recreational use would benefit under the Proposed Action. No adverse impacts to this use is expected to occur.

#### **IMPACTS ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

Cross country motorized recreational use occurring within the WSA would negatively impact desert tortoise directly and indirectly through the destruction of burrows and vegetation. This activity would contribute to a decline in the desert tortoise population of the Gold Butte region. Because motorized vehicle use will occur in random unpredictable patterns, no impacted acreage figure is estimated. Monitoring will be used to measure impacts on tortoise populations and to indicate when and where control measures are warranted.

**CONCLUSION:** Dispersed motorized recreational use has the potential for impacting desert tortoise and their habitat.

#### **ADVERSE IMPACTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED**

The unavoidable adverse impacts would be those associated with the loss of naturalness values, outstanding opportunities for solitude and desert tortoise habitat as a result of increased off-road motorized recreational use.

#### **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY**

Nondesignation of the WSA would allow all present short-term uses to continue. Motorized recreational use would reduce wilderness values of naturalness and outstanding opportunities for solitude and the values of the desert tortoise habitat.

#### **IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES**

Motorized recreational use has the potential to create an irreversible and irretrievable commitment of wilderness and desert tortoise habitat resources within the WSA. The significance of this potential is directly related to the future levels of use which are at present predicted to increase slightly.

#### **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

All 11,835 acres of public land in the Garrett Buttes WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-17).

#### **IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES**

##### **Naturalness**

Naturalness values would be retained by the closure of the WSA to motorized recreational vehicles, thus preventing a projected 255 visits of motorized recreational use from occurring annually within the study area. This action would close existing ways and would halt the formation of new two-wheel tracks associated with repeated off-road use.

##### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation**

Occasional unauthorized off-road vehicle use would detract from the feeling solitude for those visitors close to the boundary roads, especially during hunting season. Those portions of the WSA that offer secluded and isolated locales would be retained.

The area would provide less than outstanding opportunities for primitive recreational activities such as hiking, horse backriding and hunting. The majority of the use would be hunting. Primitive recreational (non-motorized) use within the WSA is projected to increase from 50 to 110 visits annually.

Maintenance of existing range improvements and wildlife developments would not change. This activity

would have a negligible affect on solitude as it would be of a short duration occurring only once or twice a year.

#### **Special Features**

The desert tortoise (Gopherus agassizii) may occur within the WSA. The population which inhabits the Gold Butte geographical area is of the same genetic identity as the Beaver Dam Slope population (Federally listed as "Threatened"). The WSA's is currently uncategorized desert tortoise habitat. (Desert Tortoise Habitat, Map 3-27).

The desert tortoise population would remain protected under this alternative. It would receive the added protection afforded from wilderness designation.

**CONCLUSION:** Designating the WSA as wilderness would preserve wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities that exist for solitude, and would enhance the protection of desert tortoise.

#### **IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE**

Wilderness designation would close the 11,835 acre Garrett Butte WSA to all forms of motorized recreational use. Approximately 180 visits annually of motorized recreational use, including off-road driving, motorized access for hunting and trapping, and vehicle camping, would be eliminated from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for motorized recreational use is located throughout the region; therefore, motorized recreational use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

**CONCLUSION:** Motorized recreational use of 180 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

#### **IMPACTS ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

The potential for motorized vehicle impacts on tortoises and their habitat would be eliminated through closure of the area to vehicle use.

**CONCLUSION:** Impacts on desert tortoise due to motorized vehicle use would be eliminated.

## QUAIL SPRINGS WSA (NV-050-411)

### PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE)

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 12,145 acre area as unsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-18).

#### IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES

##### Naturalness

The projected designations of two 1 mile wide utility corridors would allow the development of above and below ground utilities and a railroad line extending 6 miles across the WSA. Construction projections within a utility corridor of five transmission lines, two gas and two fiber optic lines, and three access roads would result in the removal of vegetation and the disruption of soils physically disturbing an estimated 200 acres. A transportation corridor would include the construction of a railroad line and associated access routes physically disturbing an estimated 65 acres. The placement of towers, transmission and rail lines across the landscape would result in a modified landform, detracting from the natural character of the entire area because of the open terrain where they are to be constructed.

Motorized recreational use would continue within the WSA under the Proposed Action. The study area's terrain consists primarily of an open alluvial fan, that is readily accessible to motorized vehicles. The construction of access roads associated with the projected development of new utilities would increase accessibility into the WSA for motorized vehicles. Motorized recreational use is projected to increase from an estimated 150 to 190 visits annually. Increased cross country vehicle use would create new two-wheel tracks across the area's landscape. The repeated use by vehicles across these tracks would remove vegetation and compact soils. An estimated 20 acres would be physically disturbed from this use.

##### Solitude and Primitive Recreation

Under the Proposed Action, outstanding opportunities for solitude within the WSA would be lost as a result of the overwhelming sights and sounds created by the continuing use of heavy equipment for the construction and maintenance of the proposed utilities, rail lines and associated roads, and by motorized recreational vehicles.

The aforementioned activities would further diminish opportunities for primitive (non-motorized) recreation within the WSA. Under the Proposed Action, visitors would be less inclined to frequent the area for hiking and horseback riding. Primitive recreational use within the WSA is projected to increase from an estimated 30 to 40 visits annually.

##### Special Features

The desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) occurs within the WSA. Desert tortoise which inhabit the WSA are part of the Las Vegas/Coyote Springs Valley population. The entire WSA is considered Category II desert tortoise habitat.

Construction of utilities, rail lines and associated access roads, and increased cross country vehicle use, projected to occur within the WSA would negatively impact the desert tortoise directly and indirectly through the destruction of burrows and vegetation. This potential activity would contribute to a decline in the desert tortoise population of the Las Vegas Valley.

Appropriate protection is foreseen for the desert tortoise as a result of future management actions implemented by the categorization of habitat within the WSA. Upon categorization of the habitat, either intense management practices would be adopted or steps taken to mitigate impacts in order to appropriately manage the tortoise population.

**CONCLUSION:** Wilderness values within the WSA would be negatively impacted under the Proposed Action. The projected development of utilities, rail lines, associated access routes, and

increased cross country vehicle use would physically disturb an estimated 285 acres within the WSA. The natural perception of the entire WSA would be impaired by the construction of utilities (towers, lines, roads) and rail lines across the landscape. The outstanding opportunities for solitude would be lost due to the sights and sounds created by the aforementioned activities occurring in the WSA. Special features would be afforded some protection through mitigative measures and the implementation of future management actions.

#### **IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE**

Motorized recreational use would continue within the WSA. This use is projected to increase from an estimated 150 to 190 visits annually. The entire WSA provides opportunities for dirt-biking, off-road driving, and motorized access for target shooting.

**CONCLUSION:** Motorized recreational use would benefit under the Proposed Action. No adverse impacts to this use is expected to occur.

#### **IMPACTS ON DEVELOPMENT OF UTILITIES**

The 12,145 acre Quail Springs WSA would be available for the development of utilities subject to mitigation for the desert tortoise.

**CONCLUSION:** The development of utilities could occur as a result of the entire WSA being recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation. No adverse impacts to these uses are expected to occur.

#### **IMPACTS ON DEVELOPMENT OF A RAIL LINE**

The 12,145 acre Quail Springs WSA would be available for the development of a rail line within a route identified by the Department of Energy subject to mitigation for the desert tortoise.

**CONCLUSION:** The development of a projected rail line could occur as a result of the entire WSA being recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation. No adverse impacts to these uses are expected to occur.

#### **IMPACTS ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

Construction of utility lines and a railroad would directly eliminate 265 acres of Category II desert tortoise habitat. Additional habitat losses are possible depending on the orientation of the two corridors but this is not possible to estimate until actual site specific plans are analyzed.

**CONCLUSION:** At least 265 acres of Category II desert tortoise habitat will be lost due to utility and railroad line construction.

#### **ADVERSE IMPACTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED**

The unavoidable adverse impacts would be those associated with the loss of naturalness and desert tortoise habitat from off-road motorized recreational use and the construction of utilities and a rail line within potential designated utility and transportation corridors.

#### **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY**

Nondesignation of the WSA would allow all present short-term uses to continue. Projected increases in motorized recreational use and the construction of utility lines and a rail line within a potential utility corridor and a transportation corridor would reduce naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude and the value of the habitat to desert tortoises over the long term.

#### **IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES**

The projected construction of utilities and a rail line within potential utility and transportation corridors would create an irreversible and irretrievable commitment of wilderness values and 265 acres of Category II desert

tortoise habitat.

## **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

All 12,145 acres of public land in the Quail Springs WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-19).

### **IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES**

#### **Naturalness**

Naturalness values would be retained by the closure of the WSA to motorized recreational vehicles, thus preventing a projected 190 visits of motorized recreational use from occurring annually within the study area. This action would close existing ways and would halt the formation of new two-wheel tracks associated with repeated off-road use.

#### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation**

The outstanding opportunities for solitude that exist within the central portion of the WSA would be retained. Visitors would utilize this portion of the WSA as it offers the best opportunities for horseback riding and nature study. Primitive recreational (non-motorized) use within the WSA is projected to increase from an estimated 30 to 60 visits annually.

#### **Special Features**

The desert tortoise (Gopherus agassizii) occurs within the WSA. The entire WSA is considered Category II desert tortoise habitat.

Wilderness designation would enhance the protection of desert tortoise by precluding activities such as the development of utilities, a rail line and associated access roads within the WSA.

**CONCLUSION:** Designating the WSA as wilderness would preserve wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities that exist for solitude, and would enhance the protection of desert tortoise.

### **IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE**

Wilderness designation would close the 12,145 acre Quail Springs WSA to all forms of motorized recreational use. Approximately 150 visits annually of motorized recreational use, including off-road driving, motorized access for target shooting and dirt-biking, would be eliminated from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for motorized recreational use is located throughout the region; therefore, motorized recreational use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

**CONCLUSION:** Motorized recreational use of 150 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

### **IMPACTS ON DEVELOPMENT OF UTILITIES**

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the possible utility route would not become a designated corridor and thus would forego the projected construction of above and below ground utilities within the WSA. The development of utilities would have to occur along a less desirable route that could be topographically more restrictive and or more costly.

**CONCLUSION:** Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the WSA would be unavailable for the development of utilities.

### **IMPACTS ON DEVELOPMENT OF A RAIL LINE**

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the possible rail line route identified by the Department of Energy would not become a designated transportation corridor and thus would forego the projected construction of a rail line and associated access routes through the WSA. The development of the rail line would have

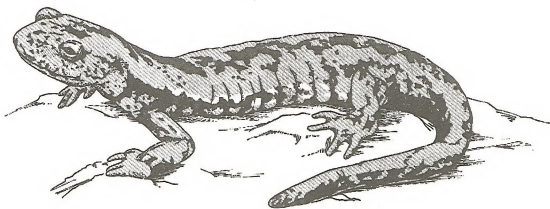
to occur along a less desirable route that could be topographically more restrictive and an exorbitant distance between destination points.

**CONCLUSION:** Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the WSA would be unavailable for the development of a rail line.

**IMPACTS ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

The loss of 265 acres of category II habitat would not occur due to closure to motorized vehicles and inability to construct utility lines or a railroad due to wilderness designation.

**CONCLUSION:** No loss of desert tortoise habitat.





## EL DORADO WSA (NV-050-423)

### PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE)

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 12,290 acre area as unsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-20).

#### IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES

##### Naturalness

Under the Proposed Action, motorized recreational use would continue within the WSA. The WSA's western and northern portions consist of wide sandy washes and bajadas that are readily accessible to vehicles. Few natural barriers exist within these regions that would restrict motorized vehicle use. In addition, the projected 6 miles of new roads associated with mineral exploration and utility line construction and maintenance would increase accessibility for motorized vehicles into the WSA. Increased cross country motorized recreational use within the WSA would create two-track routes across the terrain. Repeated use of new and existing tracks would remove vegetation and compact soils, disturbing an estimated 90 acres within the WSA. Cross country, off-road recreational use is projected to increase from 550 to 720 visits per year within the WSA.

It is projected that exploration would eventually occur on existing mining claims located within the southeast and northwest portions of the WSA, under nondesignation. Exploration efforts within the WSA would be conducted to define the extent of mineralization of the El Dorado Mining District, which lies adjacent to the area's southern boundary.

Surface disturbance associated with projected mineral exploration within the WSA's northwest region would physically disturb an estimated 9.2 acres. The blading of 3 miles of roads, construction of two pilot plants, drilling and trenching of an estimated 217 test pits would result in the removal of vegetation and soils, scarifying the area's natural terrain.

Exploration activities within the southeast portion of the WSA would physically disturb an estimated 11.7 acres. Projected exploration would involve the blading of 3 miles of roads, construction of two pilot plants and the drilling and trenching of approximately 290 test pits. Scarified topography would result from this activity.

The projected designation of a 1 mile wide utility corridor would allow the development of above and below ground utilities across the WSA's extreme southern tip. Construction projections of five transmission lines, one gas and one fiber optic line, and two access roads would result in the removal of vegetation and the disruption of soils. This activity would physically disturb an estimated 85 acres within the WSA. The placement of towers and transmission lines across the landscape would result in a modified landform, detracting from the natural character of the WSA's entire southern face.

Approximately one-half of an acre would be disturbed with the projected construction of a .25 mile access route into the undeveloped parcel of patented land located within the southeast portion of the WSA.

The placement of signs and construction of a short trail would implement a portion of the proposed Interpretative program for Gregory's Arch. These activities would have a negligible impact on the natural character of the WSA.

The natural perception within approximately 6,600 acres of the WSA would be visually impacted by the scarification of the topography, modification of the landform and continuous existence of mechanized equipment as a result of projected mineral exploration, construction and maintenance of utilities and access routes, and increased cross country motorized recreational use.

The central-core region of the WSA would be protected from surface disturbing activities; mineral exploration and development of utilities is not projected to occur in this area and the rugged landscape restricts the use of motorized vehicles. The natural character of the core of the WSA would be retained under the Proposed Action.

#### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation**

Under the Proposed Action, solitude opportunities within the southern, western and northern portions of the WSA (approximately 6,600 acres) of the WSA would deteriorate and, in some areas, be lost due to the annoying sights and sounds created by heavy equipment use in projected mineral exploration and in the construction and maintenance of new utility lines. Increased cross country motorized recreational activity would also diminish opportunities for solitude. These activities would encroach upon portions of the WSA which provide seclusion and isolated locales. Outstanding opportunities for solitude that exist within the WSA's central-core, approximately 5,690 acres, would be retained. The rugged landscape within this portion of the WSA provides sufficient screening to block outside sights and sounds and areas which offer isolated or secluded locales.

Outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation would also be lost within the 6,600 acres of the WSA due to the aforementioned activities. The deterioration of the landscape and constant visual contact of motorized vehicles would provide a hiker or backpacker few opportunities to obtain scenic photographs, view wildlife and find secluded campsites within this portion of the WSA. The WSA's central-core would provide hikers and backpackers two destination points, Gregory's Arch and Oak Creek Canyon, where visitors could find campsites, observe wildlife and photograph scenic landscapes. Outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation would be retained within this portion of the WSA, as surface disturbing activities are not projected to occur and cross country vehicle use would be restricted by the area's rugged terrain. Primitive recreational (non-motorized) use within the WSA is projected to increase from an estimated 70 to 110 visits annually.

#### **Special Features**

Several special features exist within the WSA. Gregory's Arch (a natural sandstone arch) renders unique scenic, geological and possible cultural values. Two plant species, currently listed on the "Federal Register of Threatened and Endangered Species" as Category 2 (Watch), have been identified within the WSA. Two varieties of penstemon (*Penstemon bicolor* ssp. *bicolor* and *roseus*) occur within the extreme southwestern corner of the WSA. The desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*), currently emergency listed as an endangered species, inhabits the western boundary of the WSA. Approximately 22 percent of the WSA (northwestern portion) is considered Category III desert tortoise habitat.

It is anticipated that the desert tortoise, plants and Gregory's Arch would remain protected as their identified locations are not within the immediate vicinity of any projected surface disturbing activities.

Increases in motorized recreational use projected for the WSA would negatively impact desert tortoise directly and indirectly through the destruction of burrows and vegetation. This potential activity would contribute to a decline in the desert tortoise population of the Eldorado Valley region.

Appropriate protection is foreseen for the desert tortoise as a result of future management actions implemented by the categorization of the habitat within the WSA. Upon categorization of the habitat, either management practices would be adopted, or steps taken to mitigate impacts in order to appropriately manage the tortoise population.

**CONCLUSION:** Wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation that exist within 6,600 acres of the WSA would be diminished and, in some instances, lost. The sights, sounds and surface disturbances created by increased motorized recreational use, projected mineral exploration and utility construction and maintenance would adversely impact wilderness values. The desert tortoise would be afforded some protection through mitigative measures and the implementation of future management actions. Wilderness values

would be retained within the remaining 5,690 acres of the WSA.

#### **IMPACTS ON EXPLORATION FOR AND DEVELOPMENT OF NON-ENERGY MINERAL RESOURCES**

All lands within the El Dorado WSA would remain open for mineral entry. All potential mineral resources within the WSA would be available for exploration and development. Included are 12,290 acres having low favorability for the occurrence of metallic, nonmetallic and salable minerals and moderate favorability for the occurrence of uranium (Maps 3-33 and 3-34).

Eventual exploration for precious metals is projected to occur within the northwest and southeast portions of the WSA under the Proposed Action. Development is not projected to occur as a result of exploration. No other mineral exploration or development is projected within the WSA. No adverse impacts are expected.

**CONCLUSION:** Mineral resources within the WSA would be available for exploration and development. The exploration of existing mining claims is projected to occur within the WSA. There are no projected adverse impacts on the exploration for and development of mineral resources.

#### **IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE**

Motorized recreational use would continue within the WSA. The majority of use would occur within the western half of the WSA. The WSA provides opportunities for motorized access for hunting and trapping, vehicle camping, off-road driving and spectator and non-spectator off-road vehicle events. Motorized recreational use is projected to increase from an estimated 550 to 720 visits annually.

**CONCLUSION:** Motorized recreational use would benefit under the Proposed Action. No adverse impacts to this use is expected to occur.

#### **IMPACTS ON RECREATIONAL MANAGEMENT**

The development of a recreational interpretive program for Gregory's Arch, consisting of interpretative signs and a short access trail would be implemented, as designated in the Clark County Management Framework Plan (MFP). No adverse impacts are projected under this alternative.

**CONCLUSION:** The development of an interpretive recreational program would benefit as a result of the entire WSA being recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation. No adverse impacts to this use are expected to occur.

#### **IMPACTS ON DEVELOPMENT OF UTILITIES**

The 12,290 acre El Dorado WSA would be available for the development of utilities within a possible 1 mile wide designated utility corridor. This would allow the projected construction of both above and below ground utilities.

**CONCLUSION:** The development of utilities could occur as a result of the entire WSA being recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation. No adverse impacts to these uses are expected to occur.

#### **IMPACTS ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

None of the projected surface disturbing activities are located in the 2,700 acres of desert tortoise habitat in the extreme western portion of the WSA. Dispersed (random) motorized vehicle use could impact the tortoise.

**CONCLUSION:** Impacts from dispersed motorized vehicle use are possible.

#### **ADVERSE IMPACTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED**

The unavoidable adverse impacts would be those associated with the loss of wilderness values from off-road motorized recreational use, mineral exploration and the construction of utility lines within a proposed

designated utility corridor.

#### **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY**

Nondesignation of the WSA would allow all present short-term uses to continue. Motorized recreational use, mineral exploration and the construction of utility lines within an established utility corridor would reduce the wilderness values over the long term.

#### **IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES**

The projected construction of utility lines within a proposed designated utility corridor would create an irreversible and irretrievable commitment of the wilderness values.

#### **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

All 12,290 acres of public land in the El Dorado WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-21).

#### **IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES**

##### **Naturalness**

Naturalness values would be enhanced by the closure of the WSA to motorized recreational vehicles, thus preventing a projected 720 visits of cross country, off-road and competitive motorized recreational use from occurring annually within the study area. A positive effect on naturalness would occur by the closure of the WSA to motorized vehicles, thus eliminating 470 visits of motorized recreational use estimated to occur annually within the study area. This action would close existing ways and would halt the formation of new competitive race courses and two-wheel tracks.

The private land owners are projected to exercise their rights of access to their 120 acre patented mining claim located within the southeast corner of the WSA. Construction of a projected .25 mile of road across the WSA would physically disturb one half acre of ground by the blading of the landscape. This disturbance would be visible from the southeast corner of the WSA, and would not adversely affect the overall natural perception of the area.

##### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation**

Solitude opportunities within the WSA would be enhanced under the All Wilderness Alternative. Except for occasional unauthorized use, motorized recreational vehicles would be eliminated from the WSA. This would extend the geographical area within the WSA where visitors would be able to find secluded areas. However, the periphery of the WSA would still not provide opportunities for solitude as the open terrain does not screen the sights and sounds of uses occurring along the boundaries. Visitors to the area would be inclined to mostly utilize the central-core of the WSA where the rugged landscape would shield the sights and sounds of the unauthorized off-road vehicle use. The pristine and scenic qualities of the Gregory's Arch area, Oak Creek and Lonesome Canyons would be retained.

Opportunities to experience primitive types of recreational activities would be enhanced within the WSA, by the closure to motorized recreational use. Visitors to the area would be more inclined to utilize the large sandy washes closer to the WSA's western border. Opportunities to view wildlife would be enhanced by the elimination of cross country motorized recreational use. Although hunters and rock hounders would be mechanically cut-off from the WSA, they would be able to actively pursue these activities by foot under wilderness designation. Primitive recreational (non-motorized) use within the WSA is projected to increase from an estimated 70 to 220 visits annually.

##### **Special Features**

Several special features exist within the WSA. Gregory's Arch (a natural sandstone arch) renders unique scenic, geological and possible cultural values. Two plant species, currently listed on the "Federal Register of Threatened and Endangered Species" as Category 2 (Watch), have been identified within the WSA. Two varieties of penstemon (Penstemon bicolor ssp. bicolor and roseus) occur within the extreme southwestern



corner of the WSA. The desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*), currently emergency listed as an endangered species, inhabits the western boundary of the WSA. Approximately 22 percent of the WSA (northwestern portion) is considered Category III desert tortoise habitat.

These special features would remain protected under this alternative. They would receive the added protection afforded from wilderness designation.

**CONCLUSION:** Designation would preserve wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude, and primitive recreation and the identified special features that exist within 12,257 of the WSA's 12,290 acres.

#### **IMPACTS ON EXPLORATION FOR AND DEVELOPMENT OF NON-ENERGY MINERAL RESOURCES**

The entire 12,290 acre El Dorado WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. Included are approximately 12,290 acres having low favorability for the occurrence of metallic, nonmetallic and salable minerals and moderate favorability for the occurrence of uranium (Maps 3-33 and 3-34).

The exploration for precious metals (gold, silver) projected to occur without wilderness designation would not take place under the All Wilderness Alternative due to the area being unable to support valid claims. This is projected due to the area's low mineral favorability rating and the lack of mines, prospecting and outcroppings to support the linear type of mineralization that occurs within the mining district. Development of precious metal resources is not projected to take place within the WSA.

**CONCLUSION:** Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. Mineral exploration activity projected to occur without wilderness designation would not take place due to the lack of valid claims if designation occurs. Development of precious metal resources is not projected to take place.

#### **IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE**

Wilderness designation would close the 12,290 acre El Dorado WSA to all forms of motorized recreational use. Approximately 550 visits annually of motorized recreational use, including off-road driving, motorized access for hunting, motorized nonspectator events, and vehicle camping, would be eliminated from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for off-road driving, hunting access and vehicle camping is located throughout the region; therefore, this type of motorized recreational use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands. Wilderness designation however would reduce the area within the El Dorado Valley region available for competitive nonspectator motorcycle events (Clark County Management Framework Plan ORV Designations). Under the All Wilderness Alternative, competitive motorcycle events would be diverted to less desirable and more restrictive race routes on adjacent public lands. The adverse impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be marginal.

**CONCLUSION:** Motorized recreational use of 550 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. Less desirable race routes would be utilized on adjacent public lands for competitive motorcycle events. The adverse impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be marginal.

#### **IMPACTS ON RECREATIONAL MANAGEMENT**

The proposed interpretive program for Gregory's Arch could not be fully implemented under the All Wilderness Alternative as interpretive signing could be precluded from the wilderness. However, signs could be posted in close proximities outside of the wilderness. The development of a trail to Gregory's Arch would be implemented. This would primarily consist of the clearing of brush along a path that would blend in with the contour of the landscape. The interpretive program would not be adversely affected by designation of the WSA for wilderness.

**CONCLUSION:** The proposed interpretive program could not be fully implemented under the All Wilderness Alternative as interpretive signing would be precluded. Designation of the WSA as

wilderness would not adversely affect this program.

#### **IMPACTS ON DEVELOPMENT OF UTILITIES**

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the possible utility route identified by potential users would not become a designated corridor and thus would forego the projected construction of above and below ground utilities. The development of utilities would have to occur along a less desirable route that could be topographically more restrictive, a greater distance to the identified point of destination, and be prohibitively costly.

**CONCLUSION:** Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the WSA would be unavailable for the development of utilities. Less desirable routes would be utilized by potential utility users.

#### **IMPACTS ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

Desert tortoise would receive added protection due to the area being designated as wilderness.

**CONCLUSION:** Added protection of desert tortoise habitat due to elimination of motorized vehicle use.

#### **ALTERNATIVE A (PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE)**

Under this alternative, 9,570 acres of public land would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 2,720 acres of public land would be recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-22).

#### **IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES**

##### **Naturalness (Suitable Portion)**

The 9,570 acre area recommended suitable would be closed to motorized recreational use, eliminating 280 visits of motorized recreational use estimated to occur annually within this portion of the WSA. This would improve the naturalness values within those areas of the recommended suitable portion that are accessible to motorized vehicles.

The perception of naturalness within the southeastern and northwestern portions of the recommended suitable area (approximately 400 acres) would be negatively impacted by the mineral activity and development of utilities projected to occur on adjacent unsuitable lands. These activities would diminish the scenic qualities within portions of the suitable area.

The private land owners are projected to exercise their access rights to their 120 acre patented mining claim located within the southeast corner of the WSA. Construction of a projected .25 mile of road across the WSA would physically disturb one half acre of ground by the blading of the landscape. This disturbance would be visible from the southeast corner of the WSA, and would not adversely affect the overall natural perception of the suitable area.

##### **Naturalness (Nonsuitable Portion)**

Under Alternative A, motorized recreational use would continue within the 2,720 acres of the WSA recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation. This would include 3.5 miles of new roads projected for mineral exploration. As most of the terrain within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA is conducive to motorized types of recreational use, naturalness values that presently exist would diminish within the area due to increased activity. Motorized recreational use is projected to increase from an estimated 270 to 520 visits annually.

Surface disturbance associated with the exploration of minerals within the northern and southern portions of the nonsuitable area, would physically disturb an estimated 11.4 acres. The blading of 3.5 miles of new roads, the construction of two pilot plants, and the trenching of an estimated 282 test pits would result in the removal of vegetation and soils, scarifying the terrain.

The projected designation of a 1 mile wide utility corridor would allow the development of above and below ground utilities across the nonsuitable area's extreme southern tip. Construction projections of two



transmission lines, one gas and one fiber optic line, and one access road would result in the removal of vegetation and the disruption of soils. This activity would physically disturb an estimated 25 acres within the WSA. The placement of towers and transmission lines across the landscape would result in a modified landform, detracting from the natural character of the nonsuitable area's entire southern face.

#### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation (Suitable Portion)**

Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be available within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA. These values however, would be diminished along the western and southern borders (approximately 600 acres) as a result of the noise and visual disturbance from unauthorized off-road motorized recreational use and mineral activity, construction and maintenance of utility lines projected to occur on adjacent public lands.

The scenic, botanical and geologic qualities of Lonesome and Oak Creek Canyons and the area's rugged eastern landscape would be preserved. This terrain would also provide visitors with areas of seclusion, scenic camp sites, as well as opportunities to view wildlife and study unusual geologic features. Hikers and backpackers would be able to enjoy a quality one and two day hike within the area. Primitive recreational (non-motorized) use within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA is projected to increase from an estimated 55 to 190 visits annually.

#### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation (Nonsuitable Portion)**

The noise and visual disturbance created by off-road motorized recreational users, projected development and maintenance of utilities and mineral exploration activities, i.e. heavy equipment use, would destroy outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation available within the recommended nonsuitable area. These activities would reduce and, in some instances, eliminate areas that provide opportunities for seclusion and solitude.

The physical scars left on the landscape as a result of projected exploration efforts and utility development would void the area of any scenic or photographic qualities. The nonsuitable portion would provide hikers and backpackers with limited primitive recreational opportunities. Primitive recreational use within this area is projected to increase from an estimated 15 to 25 visits annually.

#### **Special Features**

Wilderness designation of the recommended suitable area would enhance the protection and preservation of Gregory's Arch (a natural rock arch) and the two varieties of penstemon (Penstemon bicolor ssp.: bicolor and roseus), Category 2 (Watch) species listed on the "Federal Register of Threatened and Endangered Species".

The desert tortoise (Gopherus agassizii) occurs within the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA. Increasing motorized recreational use projected for the WSA would negatively impact desert tortoise directly and indirectly through the destruction of burrows and vegetation. This potential activity would contribute to a decline in the desert tortoise population of the Eldorado Valley region.

Appropriate protection is foreseen for the desert tortoise as a result of future management actions implemented by the categorization of the habitat within the WSA. Upon categorization of the habitat, either management practices would be adopted, or steps taken to mitigate impacts in order to appropriately manage the tortoise population.

**CONCLUSION:** Wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, the two varieties of penstemon and the special geological value of Gregory's Arch would be retained within an estimated 8,970 of the 9,570 acres of the recommended suitable area. Wilderness values on the remaining 600 acres of the suitable portion would be diminished and, in some instances lost, as a result of unauthorized off-road motorized vehicle use, mineral exploration and utility line construction and maintenance projected to occur on adjacent public lands. Wilderness values would be lost on the 2,720 acres recommended nonsuitable for wilderness

designation as continued and increased cross country motorized vehicle use, projected mineral exploration and construction of utilities would adversely impact the area. The desert tortoise would be afforded some protection through mitigative measures and the implementation of future management actions.

#### **IMPACTS ON EXPLORATION FOR AND DEVELOPMENT OF NON-ENERGY MINERAL RESOURCES**

The 9,570 acres of the recommended suitable portion of the WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands. Included are all the lands within the area having low favorability for the occurrence of metallic, nonmetallic and salable minerals and those having moderate favorability for the occurrence of uranium (Maps 3-33 and 3-34).

The exploration for precious metals (gold, silver) projected to occur without wilderness designation would not take place under Alternative A as mineralization of the area is not expected to support valid claims. With or without wilderness designation, actual development of precious metal resources is not projected to take place within the recommended suitable area.

All lands within the 2,720 acres recommended nonsuitable for wilderness would remain open for mineral entry. Included are all the lands within the area having low favorability for the occurrence of metallic, nonmetallic and salable minerals and those having moderate favorability for the occurrence of uranium. All potential mineral resources within the WSA would be available for exploration and development.

Eventual exploration of existing claims for precious metals is projected to occur within the northwest and southeast portions of the recommended nonsuitable area under Alternative A. Development is not projected to occur as a result of exploration. No other mineral exploration or development is projected within the WSA. No adverse impacts are expected.

**CONCLUSION:** Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA. Mineral exploration activity projected to occur without wilderness designation would not take place due to lack of valid claims if designation occurs. Exploration of existing mining claims is projected within the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA. There are no projected adverse impacts on the exploration of mineral resources within this area. Development of precious metal resources is not projected to take place within either the recommended suitable or nonsuitable areas.

#### **IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE**

Wilderness designation would close 9,570 acres of the WSA recommended suitable to motorized recreational use, eliminating approximately 280 visits of motorized recreational use annually. Public land offering similar opportunities for motorized recreational use is located throughout the region; therefore, some motorized recreational use foregone would be absorbed within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA and on surrounding public lands. Wilderness designation however would reduce the area within the El Dorado Valley region available for competitive nonspectator motorcycle events (Clark County Management Framework Plan ORV Designations). Under Alternative A, competitive motorcycle events would be diverted to less desirable and more restrictive race routes on adjacent public lands. The adverse impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be marginal.

Motorized recreational use would continue within the 2,720 acres recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation. Terrain within this portion of the WSA is primarily conducive to motorized types of recreational activities, including dirt biking, hunting and trapping access and cross country non-spectator motorized events. Motorized recreational use is projected to increase from an estimated 270 to 520 visits annually.

**CONCLUSION:** Motorized recreational use would be eliminated on the 9,570 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation and approximately 280 visits would be foregone annually. Less desirable race routes would be utilized on adjacent public lands for competitive motorcycle events.

The adverse impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be marginal.

#### **IMPACTS ON RECREATIONAL MANAGEMENT**

The proposed interpretative program for Gregory's Arch could not be fully implemented under Alternative A as interpretative signing would be precluded from the recommended suitable portion of the WSA. However, signs could be posted in close proximities outside of the area. The development of a trail to Gregory's Arch would be implemented. This would primarily consist of the clearing of brush along a path that would blend in with the contour of the landscape. The interpretative program would not be adversely affected by designation of the WSA for wilderness.

**CONCLUSION:** The proposed Interpretative program could not be fully implemented under Alternative A as interpretative signing would be precluded. Designation of the recommended suitable area as wilderness would not adversely affect this program.

#### **IMPACTS ON DEVELOPMENT OF UTILITIES**

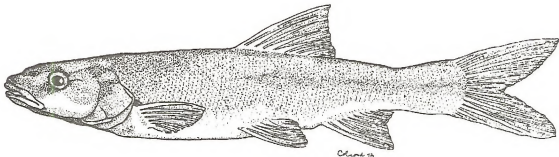
Under Alternative A, the possible utility route identified by potential users through the recommended suitable portion would not become a designated corridor and thus would forego the projected construction of above and below ground utilities. The proposed development could however, occur along that portion of the identified route located within the recommended nonsuitable area. Preclusion of potential utility development from the suitable area could mean the identification of a less desirable and more restrictive route.

**CONCLUSION:** Under Alternative A the recommended suitable portion of the WSA would be unavailable for the development of utilities. Less desirable routes would be utilized by potential utility users.

#### **IMPACTS ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

None of the projected surface disturbing activities are located in the 2,700 acres of desert tortoise habitat in the extreme western portion of the WSA. Dispersed (random) motorized vehicle use could impact the tortoise.

**CONCLUSION:** Impacts from dispersed motorized vehicle use are possible.



## IRETEBA PEAKS WSA (NV-050-438)

### PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE)

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 14,994 acre area as unsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-23).

#### IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES

##### Naturalness

Under the Proposed Action, motorized recreational use would continue within the WSA. The WSA's southern area consists of wide sandy washes and bajadas that are readily accessible to vehicles. In addition, the new roads associated with projected mineral exploration and utility line construction would increase accessibility for motorized vehicles into the WSA's northern and southern regions. Increased cross country motorized recreational use within the WSA would create two-track routes across the terrain. Repeated use of new and existing tracks would remove vegetation and compact soils, disturbing an estimated 15 acres within the WSA. Cross country, off-road recreational use is projected to increase from 65 to 130 visits per year within the WSA.

It is projected that exploration for precious metals would eventually occur within the southern and northern portions of the WSA. Exploration efforts within the WSA would be conducted to define the extent of mineralization of the El Dorado and Search Light Mining Districts which lie adjacent to the area's northern and southern boundaries.

Surface disturbance associated with projected mineral exploration within the WSA's northern portion would physically disturb an estimated 19.7 acres. The blading of 3 miles of roads, construction of two pilot plants, drilling and trenching of an estimated 290 test pits would result in the removal of vegetation and soils, scarifying the area's natural terrain.

Exploration activities within the southern portion of the WSA would physically disturb an estimated 26.2 acres. Projected exploration would involve the blading of 3 miles of roads, construction of three pilot plants and the drilling and trenching of approximately 350 test pits. Scars created by heavy equipment blading the roads and digging trenches would physically disrupt the landscape of the southeast portion of the study area.

The projected designation of a 1 mile wide utility corridor would allow the development of above ground utilities across the WSA's extreme northern end. Construction projections of a transmission line and access road would result in the removal of vegetation and the disruption of soils. This activity would physically disturb an estimated 25 acres within the WSA. The placement of towers and transmission lines across the landscape would result in a modified landform of the WSA's northern region.

Actual surface disturbance within the WSA from the projected activities would be an estimated 86 acres. However, the natural character within approximately 3,900 acres of the WSA would be reduced and, in some areas, be lost, as a result of increased motorized vehicle use, projected construction of utilities and associated access routes and mineral exploration.

The central-core region of the WSA would be protected from surface disturbing activities; mineral exploration and development of utilities are not projected to occur in this portion and the area's rugged landscape restricts the use of motorized vehicles. The natural character of the core of the WSA would be retained under the Proposed Action.

Two springs would be developed within the northeast portion of the WSA. The use of a backhoe would have both short-term and long-term effects on naturalness in the vicinity of the spring because of surface disturbance. Vegetation would become re-established two or three years after development. Disturbance would eventually be substantially unnoticeable near the spring. The troughs associated with the spring

would not detract from the study area's natural quality.

#### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation**

Under the Proposed Action, solitude opportunities within the southern and northern portions of the WSA (approximately 4,800 acres) of the WSA would deteriorate and, in some areas, be lost due to the annoying sights and sounds created by heavy equipment use in projected mineral exploration and in the construction and maintenance of new utility lines. Increased motorized vehicle activity would also diminish opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. The deterioration of the landscape and constant visual contact of motorized vehicles would provide a hiker or backpacker few opportunities to obtain scenic photographs, view wildlife and find secluded campsites within these areas.

Outstanding opportunities for solitude and less than outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation would be available within the central-core (approximately 10,194 acres) of the WSA. This area's rocky terrain, consisting of large granitic boulders and numerous rock lined drainages, provides screening and numerous secluded locales. Portions of the central region would provide visitors with scenic views of Lake Mead and opportunities to hunt upland game birds and bighorn sheep. Primitive recreational (non-motorized) use within the WSA is projected to increase from an estimated 50 to 80 visits annually.

The construction and maintenance of the proposed range improvements would have a negligible effect on solitude values within the WSA. Construction and maintenance would be done primarily by hand with only occasional use of mechanized equipment. Construction of the projects would be completed in short durations and maintenance would be conducted once a year.

#### **Special Features**

Two plant species, currently listed on the "Federal Register of Threatened and Endangered Species" as Category 2 (Watch), occur within the WSA. Two varieties of penstemon (Penstemon bicolor ssp. bicolor and roseus) have been identified along the western side of Ireteba ridge. It is anticipated that the plants would remain protected as their identified locations are not within the immediate vicinity of any projected surface disturbing activities.

The desert tortoise (Gopherus agassizii) inhabits the southern boundary of the WSA. The area is considered Category II desert tortoise habitat.

Increases in motorized recreational use and the construction of access routes for mineral exploration are projected for the area. This surface disturbing activity would negatively impact desert tortoise directly and indirectly through the destruction of burrows and vegetation. This potential activity would contribute to a decline in the desert tortoise population of the Eldorado Valley region.

Appropriate protection is foreseen for the desert tortoise as a result of future management actions implemented by the categorization of habitat within the WSA. Upon categorization of the habitat, either management practices would be adopted, or steps taken to mitigate impacts in order to appropriately manage the tortoise population.

**CONCLUSION:** Wilderness values of naturalness, and any outstanding opportunities for solitude that exist within 4,800 acres of the WSA would be diminished and, in some instances, lost. The sights, sounds and surface disturbances created by increased motorized recreational use, projected mineral exploration and utility construction and maintenance would negatively impact wilderness values. Desert tortoise would be afforded some protection through mitigative measures and the implementation of future management actions. Wilderness values would be retained within the remaining 10,194 acres of the WSA.

#### **IMPACTS ON EXPLORATION FOR AND DEVELOPMENT OF NON-ENERGY MINERAL RESOURCES**

All lands within the Ireteba Peaks WSA would remain open for mineral entry. All potential mineral resources within the WSA would be available for exploration and development. Included are 900 acres having



moderate favorability for the occurrence of metallic minerals and 14,994 acres having moderate favorability for the occurrence of uranium (Maps 3-37 and 3-38).

Eventual exploration for precious metals is projected to occur within the northern and southern portions of the WSA under the Proposed Action. Development is not projected to occur as a result of exploration. No other mineral exploration or development is projected within the WSA. No adverse impacts are expected.

**CONCLUSION:** Mineral resources within the WSA would be available for exploration and development. The exploration for precious metals is projected to occur within the WSA. There are no projected adverse impacts on the exploration for and development of mineral resources.

#### **IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE**

Motorized recreational use would continue within the WSA. The majority of use would occur within the western half of the WSA. The WSA provides opportunities for motorized access for hunting and trapping and off-road driving. Motorized recreational use is projected to increase from an estimated 65 to 130 visits annually.

**CONCLUSION:** Motorized recreational use would benefit under the Proposed Action. No adverse impacts to this use is expected to occur.

#### **IMPACTS ON DEVELOPMENT OF UTILITIES**

The 14,994 acre Ireteba Peaks WSA would be available for the development of utilities within a route, identified by potential users, for a possible 1 mile wide designated utility corridor. This would allow the projected construction of a 500 kv transmission line and access route.

**CONCLUSION:** The development of utilities could occur as a result of the entire WSA being recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation. No adverse impacts to these uses are expected to occur.

#### **IMPACTS ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

Projected mineral development and vehicle use in the southern portion of the WSA would cause the loss of approximately 30 acres of Category II habitat.

**CONCLUSION:** Loss of thirty acres of habitat due to mineral exploration and motorized vehicle use.

#### **ADVERSE IMPACTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED**

The unavoidable adverse impacts would be those associated with the loss of wilderness values and desert tortoise habitat from off-road motorized recreational use, mineral exploration and the construction of utility transmission lines within a projected designated utility corridor.

#### **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY**

Nondesignation of the WSA would allow all present short-term uses to continue. Motorized recreational use, mineral exploration and the construction of utility transmission lines within an established utility corridor would reduce the wilderness values over the long-term.

#### **IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES**

The projected construction of utility transmission lines within a projected designated utility corridor would create an irreversible and irretrievable commitment of the wilderness values. Loss of desert tortoise habitat due to mineral exploration would also be an irreversible and irretrievable commitment.

#### **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

All 14,994 acres of public land in the Ireteba Peaks WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-24).



## IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES

### Naturalness

Naturalness values would be retained by the closure of the WSA to motorized recreational vehicles, thus preventing a projected 130 visits of cross country, off-road motorized recreational use from occurring annually within the study area. This action would close existing ways and halt the formation of new two-wheel tracks associated with repeated off-road use.

Two springs would be developed within the northeast portion of the WSA. Minor surface disturbance resulting during development would have a negligible short-term effect on naturalness in the immediate vicinity of the springs due to vegetation disturbance. The presence of the spring would not detract from the area's natural character as vegetation would reestablish over time and the small troughs would be camouflaged to blend in with the surrounding landscape.

### Solitude and Primitive Recreation

Solitude opportunities within the WSA would be enhanced under the All Wilderness Alternative. Except for occasional unauthorized use, motorized recreational vehicles would be eliminated from the WSA. This would extend the geographical area within the WSA where visitors would be able to find secluded areas. Visitors to the area would be inclined to utilize the central-core of the WSA where the rugged landscape would shield the sights and sounds of the unauthorized off-road vehicle use. The pristine qualities of the WSA would be retained.

Opportunities to experience primitive types of recreational activities would be enhanced within the WSA, but would remain less than outstanding, by the closure to motorized recreational use. Hikers and backpackers would be inclined to utilize the high serrated ridgeline where views of Lake Mead are best and trees are available for cover. Although hunters and rock hounders would be mechanically cut-off from the WSA, they would be able to actively pursue these activities by foot under wilderness designation. Primitive recreational (non-motorized) use within the WSA is projected to increase from an estimated 50 to 150 visits annually.

The construction and maintenance of two developed springs within the eastern portion of the WSA would not detract from the opportunities for solitude. Construction and maintenance of the springs would be conducted by hand and in short durations.

### Special Features

The desert tortoise (Gopherus agassizii) and the two varieties of penstemon (Penstemon bicolor ssp. bicolor and roseus) would receive additional protection under this alternative. They would receive the added protection afforded from wilderness designation.

**CONCLUSION:** Designation would preserve wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude, and the special features of desert tortoise and sensitive plants that exist within the WSA.

## IMPACTS ON EXPLORATION FOR AND DEVELOPMENT OF NON-ENERGY MINERAL RESOURCES

The entire 14,994 acre Iteba Peaks WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. Included are 900 acres having moderate favorability for the occurrence of metallic minerals and 14,994 acres having moderate favorability for the occurrence of uranium (Maps 3-37 & 3-38).

**CONCLUSION:** Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. Development of precious metal resources is not projected to take place.

## IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE

Wilderness designation would close the 14,994 acre Iteba Peaks WSA to all forms of motorized

recreational use. Approximately 65 visits annually of motorized recreational use, including off-road driving and motorized access for hunting and trapping. Public land that offers similar opportunities for motorized recreational use is located throughout the region; therefore, motorized recreational use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

**CONCLUSION:** Motorized recreational use of 65 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

#### **IMPACTS ON DEVELOPMENT OF UTILITIES**

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the possible utility route identified by potential users would not become a designated corridor and thus would forego the projected construction of a transmission line and access route. The development of utilities would have to occur along a less desirable route that could be restricted due to distance and prohibitive costs.

**CONCLUSION:** Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the WSA would be unavailable for the development of utilities. Less desirable routes would be utilized by potential utility users.

#### **IMPACTS ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

Desert tortoise would receive additional protection due to the closure of the area to motorized vehicle use and withdrawal from mineral entry. The loss of thirty acres of habitat would not occur.

**CONCLUSION:** Increased protection of tortoise habitat and no loss of habitat due to mining or vehicle use.

#### **ALTERNATIVE A (PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE)**

Under this alternative, 10,155 acres would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 4,839 acres recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-25).

#### **IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES**

##### **Naturalness (Suitable Portion)**

The 10,155 acre area recommended suitable would be closed to motorized recreational use, eliminating 15 visits of motorized recreational use estimated to occur annually within this portion of the WSA. This would improve the naturalness values within those areas of the recommended suitable portion that are accessible to motorized vehicles.

Two springs would be developed within the northeast portion of the recommended suitable portion of the WSA. Minor surface disturbance resulting during development would have a negligible short-term effect on naturalness in the immediate vicinity of the springs due to vegetation disturbance. The presence of the spring would not detract from the area's natural character as vegetation would reestablish over time and the small troughs would be camouflaged to blend in with the surrounding landscape.

##### **Naturalness (Nonsuitable Portion)**

Under Alternative A, motorized recreational use would continue within the recommended nonsuitable portion of the WSA. Increased cross country motorized recreational use within the WSA would create two-track routes across the terrain. Repeated use of new and existing tracks would remove vegetation and compact soils, disturbing an estimated 12 acres within the WSA. Motorized recreational use is projected to increase from an estimated 50 to 115 visits annually.

It is projected that exploration for precious metals would eventually occur within the southern and northern portions of the recommended nonsuitable area. Exploration efforts within the WSA would be conducted to define the extent of mineralization of the El Dorado and Search Light Mining Districts, which lie adjacent to the area's northern and southern boundaries.

Surface disturbance associated with projected mineral exploration within the nonsuitable area's northern region would physically disturb an estimated 19.7 acres. The blading of 3 miles of roads, construction of two pilot plants, drilling and trenching of an estimated 290 test pits would result in the removal of vegetation and soils, scarifying the area's natural terrain.

Exploration activities within the southern portion of the nonsuitable area would physically disturb an estimated 26.2 acres. Projected exploration would involve the blading of 3 miles of roads, construction of three pilot plants and the drilling and trenching of approximately 350 test pits. Scars created by heavy equipment blading the roads and digging trenches would physically disrupt the landscape of the southeast portion of the study area.

The projected designation of a 1 mile wide utility corridor would allow the development of above ground utilities across the nonsuitable area's northern region. Construction projections of a transmission line and access road would result in the removal of vegetation and the disruption of soils. This activity would physically disturb an estimated 25 acres within the WSA. The placement of towers and transmission lines across the landscape would result in a modified landform of the WSA's northern region.

Actual surface disturbance within the WSA from the projected activities would be an estimated 83 acres. However, the natural character of the recommended nonsuitable area would be reduced and, in some areas, be lost, as a result of increased motorized vehicle use, projected construction of utilities and associated access routes and mineral exploration.

#### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation (Suitable Portion)**

Outstanding opportunities for solitude and less than outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation would be retained within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA. This area's rocky terrain provides excellent screening to block out activities occurring on the adjacent public lands. The large granitic boulders and rocky outcrops which make up the area's terrain provides numerous secluded areas.

The pristine landscape would provide hunters and backpackers scenic overviews of Lake Mead. Portions of the central region would provide visitors with opportunities to hunt upland game birds and bighorn sheep. Primitive recreational (non-motorized) use within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA is projected to increase from 30 to 110 visits annually.

The construction and maintenance of two developed springs within the eastern portion of the recommended suitable area would not detract from the opportunities for solitude. Construction and maintenance of the springs would be conducted by hand and in short durations.

#### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation (Nonsuitable Portion)**

The noise and visual disturbance created by motorized recreational users, construction of utility transmission lines and projected mineral exploration activities, i.e. heavy equipment use, would destroy the outstanding opportunities for solitude within the recommended nonsuitable area of the WSA. These activities would reduce and, in some instances, eliminate areas that provide opportunities for seclusion and solitude. The physical scars left on the landscape as a result of exploration efforts would void the area of any scenic or photographic qualities.

The nonsuitable portion would provide hunters and hikers with limited primitive recreational opportunities. Most users would utilize the area for access into the recommended suitable portion. Primitive recreational use within this area is projected to increase from an estimated 20 to 40 visits annually.

#### **Special Features**

Two varieties of penstemon (Penstemon bicolor ssp. bicolor and roseus) are also included as Category 2 (Watch) listings on the Federal Register. These two species of plants occur along the western side of Itebeba ridge within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA.

These special features would remain protected under this alternative. The special features located within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA would receive the added protection afforded from wilderness designation.

The desert tortoise (Gopherus agassizii) inhabits the southern boundary area of the WSA. This area is considered Category II tortoise habitat.

Increases in motorized recreational use and the construction of access routes for mineral exploration are projected for the area. This surface disturbing activity would negatively impact desert tortoise directly and indirectly through the destruction of burrows and vegetation. This potential activity would contribute to a decline in the desert tortoise population for the Eldorado Valley region.

Appropriate protection is foreseen for the desert tortoise as a result of future management actions implemented by the categorization habitat within the WSA. Upon categorization of the habitat, either management practices would be adopted, or steps taken to mitigate impacts in order to appropriately manage the tortoise population.

**CONCLUSION:** Wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude and the sensitive plant species would be retained within the 10,155 acres of the recommended suitable area. Wilderness values would be lost on the 4,839 acres recommended unsuitable for wilderness designation as continued and increased cross country motorized vehicle use, projected mineral exploration and construction of utilities would negatively impact the area. The desert tortoise would be afforded some protection through mitigative measures and the implementation of future management actions.

**IMPACTS ON EXPLORATION FOR AND DEVELOPMENT OF NON-ENERGY MINERAL RESOURCES**  
The 10,155 acres of the recommended suitable portion of the WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands. Included are 190 acres having moderate favorability for the occurrence of metallic minerals and 10,155 acres having moderate favorability for the occurrence of uranium (Maps 3-37 and 3-38). Exploration for precious metals within this portion of the WSA is not projected as the most accessible potential areas are located within the recommended unsuitable area.

All lands within the 4,839 acres recommended unsuitable for wilderness would remain open for mineral entry. Included are 710 acres having moderate favorability for the occurrence of metallics and 4,839 acres having moderate favorability for the occurrence of uranium. Eventual exploration for precious metals is projected to occur within the northern and southern portions of the recommended unsuitable area under Alternative A. Development is not projected to occur as a result of exploration. No other mineral exploration or development is projected within the WSA. No adverse impacts are expected.

**CONCLUSION:** Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the recommended suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration for precious metals is projected within the recommended unsuitable portion of the WSA. There are no projected adverse impacts on the exploration of mineral resources within this area. Development of precious metal resources is not projected to take place within either the recommended suitable or unsuitable areas.

**IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE**  
Wilderness designation would close 10,155 acres of the WSA recommended suitable to motorized recreational use, eliminating approximately 15 visits of motorized recreational use annually. Public land offering similar opportunities for motorized recreational use is located throughout the region. Therefore, motorized recreational use foregone would be absorbed within the unsuitable portion of the WSA and on surrounding public lands. The impact of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Motorized recreational use would continue within the 4,839 acres recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation. This portion of the WSA provides opportunities for motorized access for hunting and trapping and off-road driving. Motorized recreational use is projected to increase from an estimated 50 to 115 visits annually.

**CONCLUSION:** Motorized recreational use would be eliminated on the 10,155 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation and approximately 15 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

#### **IMPACTS ON DEVELOPMENT OF UTILITIES**

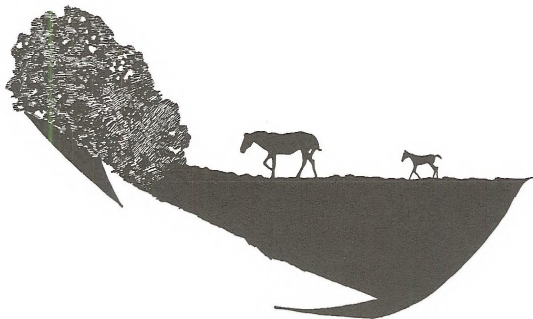
The 4,839 acres recommended nonsuitable within the Ireteba Peaks WSA would be available for the development of utilities within a route, identified by potential users, for a possible 1 mile wide designated utility corridor. This would allow the projected construction of a transmission line and associated access route.

**CONCLUSION:** The development of utilities could occur as a result of the recommended nonsuitable area not being designated wilderness. No adverse impacts to this use are expected to occur.

#### **IMPACTS ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

Projected mineral development and vehicle use in the southern portion of the WSA would cause the loss of approximately 30 acres of Category II habitat.

**CONCLUSION:** Loss of thirty acres of habitat due to mineral exploration and motorized vehicle use.





## **JUMBO SPRINGS WSA (NV-050-236)**

### **PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE)**

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 3,466 acres area as unsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-26).

#### **IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES**

##### **Naturalness**

Although the area's landscape is not conducive to vehicles, nondesignation of the WSA as wilderness would leave the area open to motorized recreational use. Motorized recreational use within the area would have a negligible impact on the area's natural values, as the WSA's rugged landscape limits this activity. The placement of one bighorn sheep guzzler within the area would have a negligible affect on the WSA's natural character. The placement and design of the tanks would blend into the landscape and only be recognizable from their immediate vicinity.

##### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation**

The less than outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation that exist within the WSA would be retained. The noise and visual disturbance from occasional unauthorized off-road vehicle use would not diminish these qualities within the WSA.

##### **Special Features**

The desert tortoise (Gopherus agassizii) may occur within the WSA. This area is currently not categorized as desert tortoise habitat.

**CONCLUSION:** No long-term negative impacts to wilderness qualities would occur within the Jumbo Springs WSA under the No Wilderness Alternative.

#### **IMPACTS ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

No activities which would adversely impact desert tortoise habitat are projected.

**CONCLUSION:** No impact to desert tortoise.

#### **ADVERSE IMPACTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED**

No unavoidable adverse impacts would occur.

#### **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY**

Nondesignation of the WSA would allow all present short-term uses to continue.

#### **IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES**

No irreversible or irretrievable commitments of any resources are projected to occur.

### **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

All 3,466 acres of public land in the Jumbo Springs WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-27).

#### **IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES**

##### **Naturalness**

Naturalness values within the WSA would benefit by the withdrawal of the area from possible mineral exploration and development. There would be a slight positive affect on naturalness with the closure of the WSA to occasional motorized recreational use and general prospecting activities. Elimination of motorized vehicles from the area would halt the formation of new tracks produced by any repeated motorized use.



The construction of one bighorn sheep guzzler within the WSA would have a negligible effect on the area's natural character. The placement and design of the tanks would blend into the landscape and only be recognizable from their immediate vicinity.

#### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation**

The less than outstanding opportunities for solitude available within the WSA would be retained under the All Wilderness Alternative. No activities are projected to occur within the WSA that would adversely impact opportunities for solitude.

The less than outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation that exist within the WSA would be retained under the All Wilderness Alternative.

#### **Special Features**

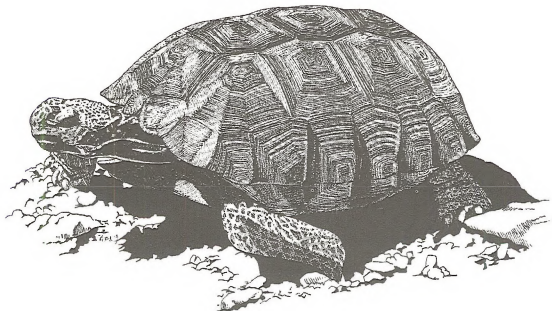
Wilderness designation would provide additional protection to desert tortoise if they occur in the WSA.

**CONCLUSION:** Designation of the Jumbo Springs WSA would preserve the less than outstanding opportunities for solitude and the less than outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. In addition, the naturalness values that exist within the WSA would be retained.

#### **IMPACTS ON THREATENED OR ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

Wilderness designation would provide additional protection for desert tortoise and their habitat due to a closure to motorized vehicle uses.

**CONCLUSION:** Wilderness designation would provide additional protection for desert tortoise through elimination of possible motorized vehicle use.



## NELLIS ABC WSA (NV-050-04R-15)

### PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE)

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 5,718 acre area as unsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-28).

#### IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES

##### Naturalness

The designation of a potential mile wide utility corridor could allow the development of above and below ground utilities across the WSA. Projected construction of five transmission lines, two gas and two fiber optic lines, and three access roads disturb an estimated 175 acres by removing vegetation and disrupting soils. Additionally, the projected designation of a mile wide transportation corridor extending the width of the WSA would allow the construction of a railroad line and associated access routes. This activity would physically disturb an additional 58 acres within the WSA. The placement of towers, transmission and rail lines across the landscape would result in a modified landform, detracting from the natural character of the entire area because of the open terrain where they are to be constructed.

Under the Proposed Action, motorized recreational use could continue within the WSA. The study area's terrain consists of an open bajada that is readily accessible to vehicles. The construction of access roads associated with the projected development of new utilities would increase accessibility into the WSA for motorized vehicles. The newly created tracks and ways from increased off-road activity would physically disturb an estimated 25 acres within the WSA. Motorized recreational use is projected to increase from an estimated 120 to 170 visits annually.

##### Solitude and Primitive Recreation

Under the Proposed Action, the less than outstanding opportunities for solitude that exist within the WSA would be further diminished as a result of the overwhelming sights and sounds created by the continuing use of heavy equipment for the construction and maintenance of the proposed utilities, rail lines and associated roads, and by motorized recreational vehicles.

The aforementioned activities would further diminish opportunities for primitive (non-motorized) recreation within the WSA. Under the Proposed Action, visitors would be less inclined to frequent the area for hiking and horse backriding. Primitive recreational use within the WSA is projected to increase from an estimated 20 to 30 visits annually.

##### Special Features

The desert tortoise is a special feature in this WSA. Impacts on the desert tortoise and its habitat are discussed under the topic Impacts to Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise.

**CONCLUSION:** Wilderness values within the WSA would be negatively impacted under the Proposed Action. The projected development of utilities, rail lines, associated access routes, and increased cross country vehicle use would physically disturb an estimated 258 acres within the WSA. The natural perception of the entire WSA would be impaired by the construction of utilities (towers, lines, roads) and rail lines across the landscape. The less than outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be lost due to the sights and sounds created by the aforementioned activities occurring in the WSA.

#### IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE

Motorized recreational use could continue within the WSA. Motorized recreational uses are projected to increase from an estimated 120 to 170 visits annually. The entire WSA provides opportunities for dirt-biking, off-road driving, and motorized access for target shooting.

**CONCLUSION:** Motorized recreational use would benefit under the Proposed Action. No adverse impacts to this use is expected to occur.

#### **IMPACTS ON DEVELOPMENT OF UTILITIES**

The 5,718 acre Nellis ABC WSA would be available for the development of utilities within a possible mile wide designated utility corridor. This would allow the projected construction of both above and below ground utilities.

**CONCLUSION:** The development of utilities would be possible.

#### **IMPACTS ON DEVELOPMENT OF A RAIL LINE**

The 5,718 acre Nellis ABC WSA would be available for the development of a rail line within a route, identified by the Department of Energy, for a possible mile wide designated transportation corridor. This would allow the projected construction of rail road tracks and associated access routes.

**CONCLUSION:** The development of a rail line could occur.

#### **IMPACTS ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

The 5,718 acres of Category II desert tortoise habitat would not receive the additional protection afforded by wilderness designation. Construction of the projected utilities and railroad line would result in a direct loss of 258 acres of habitat and seriously fragment the remaining habitat. A viable population of desert tortoise would be difficult to maintain within the WSA, as a result of adverse impacts from utility and rail line construction.

**CONCLUSION:** 258 acres of habitat would be lost by development activities. The remaining habitat would be seriously fragmented.

#### **ADVERSE IMPACTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED**

The unavoidable adverse impacts would be those associated with the loss of desert tortoise habitat and natural character of the area from off-road motorized recreational use and the construction of utilities and a railroad line.

#### **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY**

Nondesignation of the WSA would allow all present short-term uses to continue. Projected increase in motorized recreational use and the construction of utility lines and a railroad line within a potential utility corridor and a transportation corridor would reduce naturalness and the amount and quality of desert tortoise habitat over the long term.

#### **IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES**

The projected construction of utilities and a railroad line would create an irreversible and irretrievable commitment of naturalness and desert tortoise.

#### **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

All 5,718 acres of public land in the Nellis ABC WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-29).

#### **IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES**

##### **Naturalness**

A positive effect on naturalness would occur with the closure of the WSA to motorized recreational vehicles, thus preventing 170 visits of projected motorized recreational use from occurring annually within the area. This action would halt the formation of new two-wheel tracks associated with repeated motorized-vehicle use.

### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation**

The less than outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation that exist within the WSA would be retained. Visitors would continue to utilize the area for horse backriding. Primitive recreational (non-motorized) use within the WSA is projected to increase from 20 to 40 visits annually.

### **Special Features**

The desert tortoise is a special feature in this WSA. Impacts on the desert tortoise and its habitat are discussed under the topic Impacts to Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise.

**CONCLUSION:** Designating the WSA as wilderness would preserve wilderness values of naturalness and would enhance the protection of desert tortoise.

### **IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE**

Wilderness designation would close the 5,718 acre Nellis ABC WSA to all forms of motorized recreational use. Approximately 120 visits annually of motorized recreational use, including off-road driving and motorized access for target shooting, would be eliminated from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for motorized recreational use is located throughout the region; therefore, motorized recreational use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

**CONCLUSION:** Motorized recreational use of 120 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

### **IMPACTS ON DEVELOPMENT OF UTILITIES**

No utility lines could be constructed and no corridor would be established.

**CONCLUSION:** Under the All Wilderness Alternative, utilities could not be developed within the WSA.

### **IMPACTS ON DEVELOPMENT OF A RAIL LINE**

No rail line could be constructed and no transportation corridor would be established.

**CONCLUSION:** Under the All Wilderness Alternative, a rail line could not be developed within the WSA.

### **IMPACTS ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

Wilderness designation would enhance the preservation of Category II desert tortoise habitat by eliminating the habitat losses projected to occur as a result of utility development, motorized vehicle use and construction of a railroad line.

**CONCLUSION:** Wilderness designation would enhance the protection of desert tortoise by precluding activities such as the development of utilities, a rail line and associated access roads within the WSA.

## EVERGREEN ABC WSA (NV-050-01R-16)

### PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE)

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 2,694 acre area as unsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-30).

#### IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES

##### Naturalness

Under the Proposed Action, the access to and extraction of sand and gravel from the one existing material site right-of-way would physically disturb 30 acres within the WSA.

The designation of a potential mile wide utility corridor could allow the development of above ground utilities extending the 9 mile length of the WSA. Construction projections of five transmission lines and one access road would disturb up to an estimated 285 acres by removing vegetation and disrupting soils. The placement of towers and transmission lines across the landscape would result in a modified landform, detracting from the natural character of the entire area because of the open terrain where they are to be constructed.

Under the Proposed Action, motorized recreational use could continue within the WSA. The study area's terrain consists of an open bajada that is readily accessible to vehicles. The construction of access roads associated with the projected development of new utilities would increase accessibility into the WSA for motorized vehicles. The newly created tracks and ways from increased off-road activity would physically disturb an estimated 7 acres within the WSA. Unrestricted, motorized recreational use is projected to increase from an estimated 35 to 60 visits annually.

##### Solitude and Primitive Recreation

Under the Proposed Action, the less than outstanding opportunities for solitude that exist within the WSA would be further diminished as a result of the unnatural sights and sounds created by the continuing use of heavy equipment for the construction and maintenance of the proposed utilities and associated roads, and by motorized recreational vehicles. In addition, there would be continued use of heavy motorized vehicles to extract sand and gravel from the existing material site.

The aforementioned activities would further diminish opportunities for primitive (non-motorized) recreation within the WSA. Under the Proposed Action, visitors would be less inclined to frequent the area for hiking, nature study and sightseeing. Primitive recreational use within the WSA is projected to increase from an estimated 10 to 15 visits annually.

##### Special Features

The desert tortoise is a special feature in this WSA. Impacts on the desert tortoise and its habitat are discussed under the topic impacts to threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise.

**CONCLUSION:** Utilization of the WSA for the projected development of utilities, motorized recreational vehicle use and extraction of sand and gravel could physically disturb up to an estimated 322 acres. The natural perception of the entire WSA would be impaired by the construction of utilities (towers, lines, roads) across the landscape. The less than outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be further diminished due to the audio and visual distractions from the aforementioned activities occurring in the WSA.

#### IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE

Under the Proposed Action, motorized recreational use could continue within the WSA and is projected to increase from an estimated 35 to 60 visits annually. The majority of the use would occur along the eastern boundary of the WSA, where the projected access roads would be constructed. The WSA provides opportunities for motorized access for hunting and trapping, off-road driving and limited vehicle camping.



However, potential and discretionary management actions may restrict motorized recreational use within the WSA consequential to desert tortoise habitat categorization. Similar motorized recreational opportunities are available throughout the region. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

**CONCLUSION:** Motorized recreational use could continue within the WSA under the Proposed Action, benefiting this activity. However, potential and discretionary management actions may restrict this use as a result of categorization of the area's tortoise habitat. Impacts to this activity would be negligible.

#### **IMPACTS ON DEVELOPMENT OF UTILITIES**

A total of five transmission lines would be developed in the WSA. Mitigation measures (see Chapter 2) designed to protect desert tortoises and their habitat would affect site specific line location and access. However, four buried utility lines, two gas and two fiber optic, discussed in the draft EIS would not be developed because of mitigating measures and restrictions required for the protection of Category I desert tortoise habitat.

**CONCLUSION:** The proposed action would allow the development of five transmission lines in the WSA, however, four buried utility lines would not be developed because of unacceptable impacts on desert tortoise in Category I habitat.

#### **IMPACTS ON EXISTING MATERIAL SITE RIGHTS-OF-WAY**

The Nevada Department of Transportation would be able to use any or all of the existing material site at their discretion subject to mitigation required for the desert tortoise.

**CONCLUSION:** No impact to existing material site right-of-way.

#### **IMPACTS ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

The 2,694 acres of crucial desert tortoise habitat within the WSA would not receive the added protection afforded from wilderness designation but would be intensively managed to protect desert tortoise habitat under a projected Category I tortoise habitat designation. Even with the implementation of the mitigating measures described in Chapter 2, there will be a loss of 322 acres of desert tortoise habitat due to the construction of five 500 kv powerlines, removal of sand and gravel and motorized recreational vehicle use. This amounts to a loss of twelve percent of the WSA's Category I desert tortoise habitat. While replacement habitat could be provided outside of the WSA as a mitigating measure, the loss of habitat within the WSA would occur.

The draft EIS projected the construction of four buried utility lines in addition to the current projection of five electrical transmission lines. The impact of these lines would be to fragment the tortoise habitat and increase the loss of habitat dramatically. As a result of the disturbance associated with construction of four lineal underground lines and the access routes that would result, the loss of habitat would increase from 322 to 1,900 acres. The habitat would be fragmented in two ways: 1) three narrow strips 14 miles long would be created in-between the four buried lines and 2) the habitat would be fragmented into two areas - one east of the utility corridor and one west of the utility corridor. This greater loss of habitat is inconsistent with the management goals associated with the projected Category I habitat designation and therefore the four buried lines are no longer projected for construction.

**CONCLUSION:** 322 acres of Category I desert tortoise habitat would be lost due to utility development, sand and gravel extraction and motorized recreational use.

#### **ADVERSE IMPACTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED**

The unavoidable adverse impacts would be the loss of wilderness values on all 2,694 acres and the loss of 322 acres of crucial desert tortoise habitat as a result of utility line construction, sand and gravel extraction and motorized recreational use.



## **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY**

All present short-term uses could continue. Current projections reduce the amount of desert tortoise habitat in the future (long-term) by twelve percent. It will take years of future study to correlate the long-term impact this loss of habitat will have on tortoise populations.

## **IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES**

The projected actions would result in the irreversible and irretrievable commitment (loss) of 2,694 acres containing wilderness values and 322 acres of crucial desert tortoise habitat due to the permanent alteration of the area as a result of electrical transmission line construction and sand and gravel extraction.

## **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

All 2,694 acres of public land in the Evergreen ABC WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-31).

### **IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES**

#### **Naturalness**

Naturalness values would be enhanced by the closure of the WSA to motorized recreational vehicles halting the formation of new tracks and ways associated with repeated cross county and off-road vehicle use.

Extraction of sand and gravel from the one existing material site located within the northern portion of the WSA would physically disturb 30 acres. The sand and gravel operations could be seen from all locations in the WSA and would result in the loss of the visual quality of naturalness in all of the WSA.

#### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation**

Sand and gravel extraction from the authorized material site for the Nevada Department of Transportation would detract from solitude within the WSA. The sights and sounds of motorized equipment would be used in limited short durations. Opportunities for solitude would be negatively impacted in the short-term.

Visitors would utilize the WSA for occasional hiking, nature study and photography. Primitive recreational (non-motorized) use within the WSA is projected to increase from an estimated 10 to 25 visits annually.

#### **Special Features**

The desert tortoise is a special feature in this WSA. Impacts on the desert tortoise and its habitat are discussed under the topic Impacts on Threatened and Endangered Species/Desert Tortoise.

**CONCLUSION:** Extraction of sand and gravel is projected to physically disturb an estimated 30 acres. The visual perception of naturalness would be impaired on the entire WSA. Opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation within the entire WSA would be diminished during periods of active sand and gravel operations due to audio and visual distractions.

### **IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE**

Wilderness designation would close the 2,694 acre Evergreen ABC WSA to all forms of motorized recreational use. Approximately 35 visits annually of cross country motorized recreational use, including off-road driving, motorized access for hunting and vehicle camping, would be eliminated from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for motorized recreational use is located throughout the region; therefore, motorized recreational use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

**CONCLUSION:** Motorized recreational use of 35 visits would be foregone annually from the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

#### **IMPACTS ON DEVELOPMENT OF UTILITIES**

No utility lines could be constructed and no corridor would be established.

**CONCLUSION:** Under the All Wilderness Alternative, utilities could not be developed within the WSA.

#### **IMPACTS ON EXISTING MATERIAL SITE RIGHTS-OF-WAY**

The Nevada Department of Transportation would be able to use any or all of their existing material site at their discretion subject to mitigation required as part of the desert tortoise habitat categorization process.

**CONCLUSION:** No impact to existing material site right-of-way.

#### **IMPACTS ON THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES/DESERT TORTOISE**

Wilderness designation would enhance the preservation of Category I desert habitat by eliminating the habitat losses projected to occur as a result of utility development and motorized vehicle use. However, 30 acres of Category I habitat would still be lost due to sand and gravel extraction on a material site. This is a one percent loss of Category I habitat. Mitigating measures such as fencing and relocation (Chapter 2) could lessen impacts to individual animals but the 30 acres of habitat would be severely impacted.

**CONCLUSION:** 30 acres of Category I habitat would be lost due to the extraction of sand and gravel from an existing material site.



## LAHONTAN CUTTHROAT TROUT NATURAL AREA (ISA)

### PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE)

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 12,316 acre area as unsuitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-32).

#### IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES

##### Naturalness

The ISA, which contains extensive developments on the surrounding private lands, would remain open to motorized recreation use. Most of this use occurs along the 22 miles of existing roads. It is projected that this use would increase from 50 to approximately 100 visits annually. This would have a negligible impact on existing naturalness. The development of an access road to the private parcel within the ISA would add another one-tenth mile of roads available for motorized recreation. The physical disturbance to the area from the development of the access road would degrade naturalness on about one-half acre within the ISA.

Approximately 10 percent of the motorized use occurs off-road in the form of cross country travel. This use results in tracks and ruts left from vehicles going through soft, damp areas near Mahogany and Summer Camp Creeks. This would affect naturalness in the long term on about 20 acres overall within the ISA.

Required maintenance of the 2400 acre enclosure fence, one reservoir and a developed spring would be accomplished primarily with motorized equipment. This would have a negligible effect on naturalness because of the utilization of existing roads and the fact that maintenance is infrequent (less than once per year) and of short duration.

##### Solitude and Primitive Recreation

Increased motorized recreational use on the existing 22 miles of roads would continue to detract from the marginal feeling of solitude one may achieve in the area.

The ongoing maintenance of existing range improvements and wildlife developments within the ISA would detract from the feeling of solitude during the time maintenance was being performed. This is normally of short duration and is infrequent (less than twice per year).

Primitive and unconfined recreational activities of hiking, camping, photography, nature study, horseback riding and cross country skiing in the winter would continue. The increase in the presence of motorized activities would reduce the quality of this experience over the long term along the heavily travelled routes. (See Existing Situation Map).

##### Special Features

The most notable special feature of the area is the Lahontan Cutthroat trout which are found in the streams within the ISA. The existing projects which were implemented as part of the HMP developed for the area have proven successful in stabilizing and protecting the cutthroat trout habitat. The 2,410 acres within the ISA fenced the Mahogany Creek area, preventing cattle from entering the sensitive riparian habitat. The fence protects the main habitat area for the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout. The proposed access route would be constructed within the extreme southern portion of the ISA away from the trout habitat area. Mitigation measures would be done to prevent any erosional activity from depositing sediments into nearby streams or drainages. It is not anticipated that any of the projected activities for the ISA would affect the trout habitat.

**CONCLUSION:** The marginal wilderness values of the ISA would be further reduced by the increase in motorized use within the area. The special feature of the Lahontan Cutthroat trout would not be affected. Existing management would continue to protect the trout habitat.

#### **IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE**

The ISA could continue to remain open to motorized recreational use. Motorized recreational use would continue along the WSA's some 22 miles of existing roads and cross country. This use is projected to increase from an estimated 50 visits to 100 visits annually.

**CONCLUSION:** There would be no impact on motorized recreational use.

#### **IMPACTS ON LAHONTAN CUTTHROAT TROUT HABITAT**

Nondesignation of the ISA as wilderness would not affect the Lahontan Cutthroat trout habitat. The existing management of the area and the developments implemented as part of the HMP for the trout would be maintained. The increase in motorized recreational use is not anticipated to have any effect on the trout habitat because the use occurs primarily on existing roads. Mitigative measures would be taken during the construction of the proposed access route to prevent erosion and sediments from depositing into any nearby streams and drainages. Negative impacts to the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout are not anticipated under the Proposed Action.

**CONCLUSION:** There would be no negative impact on the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout habitat.

#### **ADVERSE IMPACTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED**

The unavoidable adverse impacts would be those associated with the further reduction of the WSA's marginal wilderness values from increased motorized recreational use.

#### **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY**

Nondesignation of the WSA would allow all present short-term uses to continue. Motorized recreational use would further reduce the area's marginal wilderness values.

#### **IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES**

There would be no irreversible and irretrievable commitment of the wilderness resource.

#### **ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE**

All 12,316 acres of public land in the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout ISA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation (Map 2-33).

#### **IMPACTS ON WILDERNESS VALUES**

##### **Naturalness**

The extensive developments located on the surrounded private parcels within the ISA would continue to detract from the naturalness of the area. A slight positive effect to naturalness would occur with the closure of the ISA to off-road vehicle use. This action would prevent 10 visits of projected off-road motorized recreational use from occurring annually within the ISA. This would prevent the establishment of new tracks and ruts from vehicles going through soft, damp areas near Mahogany and Summer Camp Creeks.

Most of the motorized use occurs along the 22 miles of existing cherrystemmed roads. It is projected that this use would increase from 50 to approximately 90 visits annually. This would have a negligible impact on existing naturalness. The development of an access road to the private parcel within the ISA would add another one-tenth mile of road available for motorized recreation. The physical disturbance to the area from the development of the access road would be the minimum required to allow the private landowner to exercise his right to his private property. It is anticipated that naturalness would be degraded on two-tenths of an acre within the ISA.

Maintenance of existing range improvements (exclosure fence, one reservoir and a developed spring) would likely continue using motorized equipment. Maintenance of wildlife developments would continue to be done primarily by hand. This would have a negligible effect on naturalness as the equipment would use existing cherrystemmed roads and would not be allowed cross country travel.

### **Solitude and Primitive Recreation**

Increased motorized recreational use on the existing 22 miles of roads would continue to detract from the marginal feeling of solitude one may achieve in the area. However, the effects of this would be negligible.

Ongoing maintenance of existing wildlife developments and range improvements within the ISA would detract from the feeling of solitude during the time maintenance was being performed. This is normally of short duration and is infrequent (less than twice per year).

Primitive and unconfined types of recreation, including hiking, photography, backpacking, horseback riding and cross country skiing would benefit from the closure of the ISA to off-road vehicle access. Continued use of cherrystemmed roads by motorized recreationalists would detract from the quality of the primitive experience over the long term.

### **Special Features**

The predominant special feature in the ISA is the Lahontan Cutthroat trout. The existing projects which were implemented as part of the HMP developed for the area have proven successful in stabilizing and protecting the cutthroat trout habitat. The proposed access route would be constructed within the extreme southern portion of the ISA away from the trout habitat area. Mitigation measures would be done to prevent any erosional activity from depositing sediments into any nearby streams or drainages. The trout habitat is not anticipated to be affected by projected activities within the ISA.

**CONCLUSION:** Designation of the ISA as wilderness would benefit the values of naturalness and solitude by the preclusion of off-road, cross country travel within the ISA. However, overall wilderness values in this largely roaded area would remain low. The special feature of the Lahontan Cutthroat trout would be preserved.

### **IMPACTS ON LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE**

Designation of the ISA as wilderness would close the area to off-road, cross country travel. This would be a negligible effect to recreation because only 10 percent (or about 5 visits annually) are attributed to this type of use. Motorized use on existing cherrystemmed roads would continue to increase to approximately 90 visits annually.

**CONCLUSION:** The impacts to motorized recreational use would be negligible, eliminating less than 10 percent of the existing use.

### **IMPACTS ON LAHONTAN CUTTHROAT TROUT HABITAT**

Designation of the ISA as wilderness would benefit the Lahontan Cutthroat trout habitat. The existing management of the area and the developments implemented as part of the HMP for the trout would be maintained. Motorized recreational use is not anticipated to effect the trout habitat because use would be limited to existing roads. The projected access road construction would be a good distance away from the sensitive trout habitat area. In addition, mitigation would be done to prevent any erosional activity from depositing sediment into nearby drainages and streams.

**CONCLUSION:** There would be no impact to the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout habitat from the designation of the ISA as wilderness.





# CHAPTER 5

## Consultation and Coordination

### INTRODUCTION

This Nevada Contiguous Lands Final Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement has been prepared by specialists from the Ely, Winnemucca, and Las Vegas District Offices and the Nevada State Office (See Table 5-3 List of Preparers). The entire wilderness review process has involved public participation since its initiation in 1978. The process included inventories of resources, public participation, and coordination with individuals, organizations, and other agencies. Care has been exercised to ensure that the public has been consulted and informed throughout the wilderness review process.

### PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Development of the recommendations for the Nevada Contiguous Lands Final Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement included on-going coordination and public participation. Federal Register notices and news releases announced all steps of the process to date, including notices of intent for preparation of the Schell, Sonoma-Gerlach, Callente and Clark Management Framework Plan Amendments/Wilderness Final Environmental Impact Statement, notice of availability of the Plan Amendments/EIS, notice of public hearings, and public comment periods.

The Draft EIS was filed with the Environmental Protection Agency on June 17, 1988. A BLM notice announcing the availability of the Draft EIS was also published on June 17, 1988, in the Federal Register (Volume 53, No. 117).

This notice announced that the review period ended September 16, 1988, and listed the dates and locations of the two public hearings in Reno and Las Vegas.

Over 500 copies of the Draft EIS were distributed to reviewing agencies, elected officials and interested publics. Reading copies of the Draft EIS were sent to public libraries and to BLM offices in Nevada, Utah and California. News releases were issued to the local and regional news media. Due to the size of the mailing list (over 500), the following (Table 5-1) is only a partial list of those contacted.

Table 5-1

AGENCIES, ORGANIZATIONS, AND PERSONS TO WHOM  
THE DRAFT EIS WAS SENT

**Congressional Delegation**

Senator Chick Hecht, Nevada  
Senator Harry Reid, Nevada  
Representative James H. Bilbray, Nevada  
Representative Barbara Vucanovich, Nevada

**Federal Agencies**

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation  
Department of Agriculture  
    Forest Service  
    Soil Conservation Service  
    Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service  
Department of Commerce  
    National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
Department of Defense  
    Nellis Air Force Base  
    George Air Force Base  
    Edwards Air Force Base  
    Army Corps of Engineers  
Department of Energy  
    Bonneville Power Administration  
    Western Area Power Administration  
Department of the Interior  
    Bureau of Indian Affairs  
    Bureau of Mines  
    Bureau of Reclamation  
    Fish and Wildlife Service  
    Geological Survey  
    National Park Service  
    Office of Environmental Project Review  
Department of Transportation  
    Federal Highway Administration  
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
Environmental Protection Agency

**State Agencies**

Office of the Governor  
Nevada State Clearinghouse (25 copies - distributes copies to State Agencies)  
State Senators and Assemblymen (Clark, Lincoln, Humboldt and White Pine Counties)  
University of Nevada, Reno and/or Las Vegas  
    Desert Research Institute  
    Fleischmann College of Agriculture  
    Center for Business and Economic Research  
    Department of Biological Sciences  
    Mackay School of Mines  
    Nevada Bureau of Mines

#### **Local Government**

Boulder City Chamber of Commerce  
Citizen Advisory Councils/Town Boards (11)  
Clark County Commission  
Clark County Dept. of Comprehensive Planning  
Clark County Extension Agent  
Clark County Conservation District/Soil  
Clark County Southern Nevada Museum  
Henderson Planning Department  
Henderson Chamber of Commerce  
Humboldt County Commissioners  
Humboldt County Extension Office  
Humboldt County Planning Commission  
Lincoln County Commission  
Lincoln County Conservation District  
Las Vegas City Manager  
Mayor of Boulder City  
Mayor of Callente  
Mayor of Ely  
Mayor of Henderson  
Mayor of Las Vegas  
Mayor of North Las Vegas  
Mayor of Lovelock  
Mayor of Winnemucca  
North Las Vegas Planning Department  
Pershing County Commissioners  
Washoe County Department of Regional Planning  
Washoe County Manager  
White Pine Chamber of Commerce  
White Pine County Commission  
White Pine County Conservation District  
White Pine County Extension Service

#### **Native American Councils**

Duckwater Tribal Council  
Ely Indian Colony  
Fort Mojave Tribal Council  
Intertribal Council of Nevada  
Las Vegas Tribal Council  
Summit Lake Paiute Tribe  
Winnemucca Indian Council

#### **Others**

American Assoc. of Petroleum Geologists  
American Borate Corporation  
American Horse Protection Association  
American Mining Congress  
AMSELCO Exploration Inc.  
Anaconda Minerals Co.  
Animal Protection Institute  
Atlantic Richfield Co.  
Audubon Society

Best in the Desert Racing Association  
Boulder Gem Club  
Chevron USA, Inc.  
Defenders of Wildlife  
Desert Tortoise Council  
Desert Bighorn Council  
Ducks Unlimited  
Earth First  
Fraternity of Desert Bighorn  
Friends of Nevada Wilderness  
Friends of the Earth  
Foote Mineral Company  
Gamblers Motorcycle Club  
Greenpeace  
Humane Society of Southern Nevada  
Industrial Mineral Ventures  
International Society for the Protection of Mustangs  
Las Vegas Gem Club  
Los Angeles Department of Water and Power  
Motorcycle Racing Association of Nevada  
Multiple Use Advisory Board on Federal Land Laws  
National Mustang Association  
National Wildlife Federation  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
Nature Conservancy  
Nevada Bell  
Nevada Cattlemen's Association  
Nevada League of Women Voters  
Nevada Miners and Prospectors Association  
Nevada Off-Highway Users Council  
Nevada Outdoor Recreation Association  
Nevada Power Company  
Nevada Wildlife Federation  
Nevada Woolgrowers Association  
Northern Nevada Native Plant Society  
Sierra Club  
Sierra Pacific Power Company  
Society for Range Management  
Southern California Edison  
Sunshine Mining Company  
The Wilderness Society  
Valley Electric Association  
Wildlife Management Institute  
Winnemucca Gem and Mineral Society

**Public Libraries**

Amargosa Public Library  
Star Route 15  
Box 401-T  
Lathrop Wells, Nevada 89020

Beatty Community Library  
323 Montgomery  
Beatty, Nevada 89002

Charleston Heights Library  
800 Brush Street  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89107

Clark County Community College  
Learning Resource Center  
3200 E. Cheyenne Ave.  
North Las Vegas, Nevada 89030

Clark County Library  
1401 E. Flamingo Rd.  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89109

Esmeralda County Public Library  
County Courthouse  
Goldfield, Nevada 89013

Esmeralda County Public Library  
Silver Peak, Nevada 89047

Humboldt County Library  
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445

Las Vegas Public Library  
1762 E. Charleston Blvd.  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89104

Lincoln County Library  
Caliente, Nevada 89008

Mount Charleston Public Library  
P.O. Box 269, S. R. 89038  
Mt. Charleston, Nevada 89101

North Las Vegas Library  
2300 Civic Center  
North Las Vegas, Nevada 89030

Pahrump Public Library  
Pahrump, Nevada 89041

Pershing County Library  
Lovelock, Nevada

University of Nevada, Reno  
Getchell Library  
Government Publications Dept.  
Reno, Nevada 89507

Washoe County Library  
301 S. Center Street  
Reno, Nevada 89505

White Pine County Library  
Ely, Nevada 89301

**Bureau of Land Management Offices**

Arizona Strip District Office  
196 East Tabernacle  
St. George, Utah 84770

Office of Public Affairs, BLM  
18th and C Streets, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Nevada State Office  
P.O. Box 12000  
Reno, Nevada 89520

Battle Mountain District Office  
North 2nd and South Scott Streets  
Battle Mountain, Nevada 89820

Carson City District Office  
1050 E. William Street  
Carson City, Nevada 89701

Elko District Office  
2002 Idaho Street  
Elko, Nevada 89801

Ely District Office  
Star Route 5, Box 1  
Ely, Nevada 89301

Las Vegas District Office  
4765 West Vegas Drive  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89126

Tonopah Resource Area Office  
Battle Mountain District  
102 Old Radar Base Rd.  
Tonopah, Nevada 89049

Winnemucca District Office  
704 East 4th Street  
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445

Riverside District Office  
1695 Spruce Street  
Riverside, California 92507



Ridgecrest Resource Area Office  
Riverside District  
1414 A. N. Norma  
Ridgecrest, California 93555

Needles Resource Area Office  
Riverside District  
P.O. Box 305  
Needles, California 92363

## CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER PLANS

### Federal Agencies

After review of the Draft EIS by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Desert NWR Complex), they stated that study areas Fish and Wildlife 1, 2, 3 and Evergreen ABC be recommended for wilderness designation. The desert National Wildlife Range has been proposed for wilderness designation, so they feel that it is appropriate to consider the adjoining BLM lands as a wilderness unit. The Range's original wilderness proposal (Desert Wilderness Proposal - 1971) identified these WSAs as part of the areas recommended for wilderness.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Great Basin Complex) stated their preference for these areas would be the All Wilderness Alternative for the purpose of protecting the desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*). An additional Section 7 consultation was received following the emergency designation of the desert tortoise as an endangered species. The Fish and Wildlife Service continues to support wilderness designation for desert tortoise habitat areas.

### State Agencies

Governor Richard H. Bryan, offering the consistency position for the State Departments of Agriculture, Wildlife, Minerals, Conservation and Natural Resources and the Nevada Bureau of Mines, supports the Proposed Action for those WSAs addressed in the Draft EIS.

### County Government

Humboldt County supports the Proposed Action for the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Natural Area.

Lincoln County supports the Draft EIS Proposed Action.

### Native Americans

The Western Shoshone National Council stated that the lands identified in the Draft EIS were part of the Western Shoshone Nation and that the attempt to establish a wilderness area within the territory by any agency of the United States federal government is premature.

## COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

A total of 36 written comments were received on the Nevada Contiguous Lands Draft Wilderness EIS. All of the letters received have been printed in their entirety in this chapter.

Two public hearings were held during the public review period on the Draft EIS. The first was in Las Vegas, Nevada, on August 3, 1988. Oral statements were presented by 22 people. Six people presented oral testimony at the second hearing in Reno, Nevada, on August 4, 1988. Official written transcripts of the public hearings are included in this chapter.

Substantive comments which presented new data, questioned facts and/or analyses or commented on issues bearing directly on the Draft EIS were fully evaluated and given responses. These letters and testimonies are printed in their entirety.

The letters printed in the next section are grouped as follows: federal agencies, state/local agencies, organizations/companies, and individuals. The testimonies are listed in order as given. The numbers in the left margins adjacent to each issue addressed refer to numbered responses following each document. Each letter and testimony was addressed individually in this manner. Comments from the Nevada State Clearinghouse were counted as one letter although they were composed of the individual agency comments. Table 5-2 contains a list of all comment numbers and corresponding names.

Table 5-2  
LIST OF COMMENTORS

Letters

Comment No. Commentor

Federal Agencies

- 1 Department of Energy
- 2 Bureau of Mines
- 3 Fish and Wildlife Service (Desert NWR Complex)
- 4 Fish and Wildlife Service (Great Basin Complex)
- 5 National Park Service (Western Region)
- 6 Environmental Protection Agency

State/Local Agencies

- 7 Governor's Consensus Review/Nevada State Clearinghouse
- 8 Humboldt County Commissioners

Native American Groups

- 9 Western Shoshone National Council

Organizations/Companies

- 10 Best in the Desert Racing Association
- 11 Desert Tortoise Council
- 12 Freeport Mining
- 13 Gamblers Motorcycle Club
- 14 Motorcycle Racing Association of Nevada
- 15 Sierra Club
- 16 Friends of Nevada Wilderness

Individuals

- |    |                           |    |                  |
|----|---------------------------|----|------------------|
| 17 | Edwin Ardrey              | 18 | Elliott Bernshaw |
| 19 | Anita A. Bowen            | 20 | T. Brooks        |
| 21 | K. Davies                 | 22 | Annie Glanny     |
| 23 | Michael Glenn             | 24 | Paul Guadagnoli  |
| 25 | James D. & Leeta Mae Horn | 26 | Nancy Humble     |
| 27 | Jim Humble                | 28 | JB Jacks         |
| 29 | Bob Maichle               | 30 | Robert Mekus     |
| 31 | Douglas E. Noland         | 32 | Wm. H. Plumbur   |
| 33 | Jack & Kathy Robertson    | 34 | Reed Secord      |
| 35 | Sam Snowden               | 36 | John R. Swanson  |

Oral Testimony

Comment No. Commentor

- 1 James D. Horn
- 2 Geoff Arnold, Vicroy Gold Crop.
- 3 Ray Irwin
- 4 David Hennen



## **WRITTEN TESTIMONY**







Department of Energy

Nevada Operations Office  
P.O. Box 98518  
Las Vegas, NV 89193-8518

AUG 11 1988

8550-11808-1 INK

Ben Collins, District Manager  
ATTN: Janaye Byrge, EIS Team Leader  
U.S. Bureau of Land Management  
P.O. Box 25569  
Las Vegas, NV 89126

PROPOSED WITHDRAWAL OF BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

We have reviewed the proposed land use plan containing the preliminary wilderness recommendations. Two currently designated Wilderness Study Areas (WSA) (Quail Springs and Nellis) are of interest to the Nevada Nuclear Waste Storage Investigations Project for potential rail right-of-way development. We support your recommendation that the Quail Springs and Nellis WSA be dropped from further consideration for wilderness designation.

Please continue to update the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) on the status of the WSA. If you require further information, you may contact Carl P. Gerts, Project Manager, DOE Waste Management Project Office, at 794-7920 or 101 Convention Center Drive, Las Vegas, Nevada 89109.

*Nick C. Aquilino*  
Nick C. Aquilino  
Manager

WUPO:ELL-3083

CC:  
Christopher Kouts, HQ (95-321) POMS  
W. B. Andrews, SAIC, Las Vegas, NV  
M. W. Harris, SAIC, Las Vegas, NV  
E. L. Wilcox, WUPO, NV  
W. R. Dixon, WUPO, NV

RESPONSE TO LETTER 1

Your support for the Draft EIS's Proposed Action has been noted, especially for the Quail Springs and Nellis WSAs.



## United States Department of the Interior

## BUREAU OF MINES

WESTERN FIELD OPERATIONS CENTER  
EAST 963 3RD AVENUE  
SPOKANE, WASHINGTON 99202

July 6, 1988

## Memorandum

To: Bureau of Land Management, Nevada State Office, Reno, Nevada  
From: Supervisor, Mineral Issues Involvement Section, Branch of Engineering and Economic Analysis  
Subject: Nevada Contiguous Lands Wilderness Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), Clark, Lincoln, White Pine, and Humboldt Counties, Nevada

We have reviewed the Nevada Contiguous Lands DEIS and, in general, concur with the various mineral assessments and proposed actions. However, for the Marble Canyon Wilderness Study Area (WSA), it appears that the wilderness-consideration areas were based on incomplete information. Essentially there are two geologic issues that concern this area: (1) carbonate strata and (2) detachment faults with associated allochthonous masses of rock.

Higher quality limestone is recognized in the proposed wilderness designated part of the WSA, but similar rocks may occur elsewhere because the carbonate strata occurs in most of the entire WSA. Limestone has a moderate to high (high in the northeast corner) potential for building to commercial-use purposes (Mike Diglies, U.S. Geological Survey, Menlo Park, CA, 1988, personal communication).

The detachment fault and associated upper plate rocks are in the proposed wilderness part of the WSA. Chip samples from two adits that explore the detachment-faulted rocks in this area contained anomalous barite, sylvite, and tungsten (Richard Kress, U.S. Bureau of Mines, Denver, CO, 1988, personal communication). Mines in the same geologic environment south of this area have produced gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc, and tungsten (Lincoln, 1923, pp. 242-254). The WSA has a moderate potential for the discovery of precious and base metal deposits.

We are concerned that a favorable geologic environment is included in a proposed wilderness area. Prior to a final decision, we recommend that a site-specific study of the contact area of the allochthonous rock masses be performed.

*D. Gary Banister*  
D. Gary Banister

RESPONSE TO LETTER 2

1. The BLM recognizes that higher quality limestone occurs both within the proposed suitable and unsuitable areas. The suitable boundary through Bars Canyon was based on several management concerns; these include range management practices and public concerns developed through scoping, as well as known mineral resources.
2. The boundary recommendations in the draft EIS are preliminary and will be reassessed upon receipt of the final USGS/BM mineral report and substantive comments received during the public comment period.

3



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Desert NWR Complex

1500 N. Decatur Blvd.

Las Vegas, NV 89108

August 25, 1988

Bureau of Land Management  
Las Vegas District Office  
P.O. Box 26569  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89126

Attn: Janaye Buerge  
Wilderness GIS Team Leader

Dear Janaye:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Nevada Contiguous Lands Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Our main comment is that we prefer study areas Fish and Wildlife #1, #2, #3 and Evergreen ABC be recommended for wilderness designation. The reason for this is that under the so wilderness alternative these areas, which adjoin the Desert National Wildlife Range, will be open to off-road vehicles. When off-road use occurs on these BLM lands, vehicles can easily pass onto the Desert National Wildlife Range where off-road vehicles are not permitted. Our common boundary in this area is not marked. Currently this has not been a serious problem. However, our impression is that as the populations of southern Nevada continues to grow, it will become a significant concern. Especially if proposed development by Arcojet General Corporation, east of Hwy 93 results in a new community of people in this vicinity.

One additional comment is that since the Desert National Wildlife Range is a proposed wilderness, it seems appropriate to consider the adjoining BLM land as a wilderness unit, and not as a narrow strip of land located between Hwy 93 and the boundary of Desert National Wildlife Range.

Sincerely,

*David J. Brown*  
David J. Brown  
Refuge Manager

DJB:cj

#### RESPONSE TO LETTER 3

1. Your support for the Draft EIS's All Wilderness Alternative for Evergreen and Fish and Wildlife 1, 2, and 3 NSAs, has been noted.
2. As the relationship of the Desert National Wildlife Range lands to the adjacent NSAs is a manageability issue, it is not addressed in this EIS. However, the Wilderness Study Report (WSR) being prepared for each of these NSAs will discuss this manageability issue as well as provide a rationale for the final wilderness suitable/unsuitable recommendation. The Wilderness Study Report will complete the BLMs Wilderness Review Process and stand as the Record of Decision, which will be signed by the Secretary of the Interior.

The wilderness status of the adjacent Desert National Wildlife Range lands has been identified in Chapter 3 - Affected Environment of this EIS.

4-1



#### United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
GREAT BASIN COMPLEX  
4600 Kietzke Lane, Building C  
Reno, Nevada 89502

August 29, 1985  
File # 1-5-88-TA-130

#### Memorandum

To: State Director, Bureau of Land Management, Reno, Nevada  
From: Complex Manager, Reno, Nevada  
Subject: Draft Nevada Contiguous Lands Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS/AS)

The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has reviewed the Nevada Contiguous Lands Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Statement) for preliminary wilderness recommendations on 13 Wilderness Study Areas in Clark, Lincoln, White Pine and Humboldt Counties, Nevada. Our Comments are as follows.

#### GENERAL COMMENTS

The document is concise and generally well written but is incomplete regarding wildlife resources and threatened and endangered species. Although the Supplemental Values and Wildlife Resources sections in Chapter 3, Affected Environment, mention key species and major habitat types in some cases, little information is given on the location and extent of these resources. Therefore, it is impossible to make judgments regarding the extent to which wildlife and habitats in each Wilderness Study Area may benefit from wilderness designation.

We have special concerns regarding habitat for the desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*), currently a Category 2 candidate for Federal listing as an endangered species. The Service is currently in the process of reviewing the status of candidate vertebrate species and plans to issue an updated Notice of Review in the Federal Register in the near future. Our Regional Office has recommended that the desert tortoise population north and west of the Colorado River be placed in Category 1 status. A petition has been submitted to the Service for listing of this species as endangered. The Service determined that listing is warranted, but the listing process has been precluded by higher priorities. Because of continuing severe threats to desert tortoise populations in Nevada, in part due to off-road vehicle use, wilderness designation for areas in which the tortoise is found could be of major importance in providing long-term protection for the species.

## SPECIFIC COMMENTS

## Chapter 2, Proposed Action and Alternatives.

**Marble Canyon Wilderness Study Area.** We support the proposed action to designate 8,300 acres of Marble Canyon Wilderness Study Area as wilderness. However, we believe additional information on biological resources of the area is necessary to determine if additional portions of the study site also should be included (see comments below).

**Fish and Wildlife Nos. 1, 2, and 3.** We support the All Wilderness alternative for these three study areas. The benefits that would be afforded the desert tortoise through wilderness designation of these large sections of crucial habitat, in part through eliminating motorized recreational use, would be highly important in protecting this species. Protection would also be afforded the candidate plant, *Penstemon bicolor* ssp. *roseus*. Because these three study areas are immediately adjacent to the Desert National Wildlife Range, a proposed wilderness area, we believe such designation is appropriate.

**Line Canyon Wilderness Study Area.** We support designation of the 13,895 acres as wilderness under the proposed action. We recommend that additional acreage extending easterly to encompass the *Arcinomys californicus* population (see enclosure) be included.

**Millon Hills Wilderness Study Area.** We support a modification of Alternative A (Partial Wilderness Alternative) to designate a minimum of 12,850 acres of the study area as wilderness. This designation should include Azure Ridge and the 1,800 acres of crucial desert tortoise habitat in the northerly portion of the study area.

**Evergreen Wilderness Study Area.** We support designation of the entire 2,434 acres of this study area (All Wilderness Alternative) as wilderness because of the protection it would afford the desert tortoise.

## Chapter 3, Affected Environment.

**R. 2-4. Marble Canyon Wilderness Study Area, Wildlife Resources.** No information is provided on which portion of the 19,150 acres contains bighorn sheep winter habitat, raptor and grouse habitats, and potential elk migration corridors. Locations of these habitats may be important in determining the boundaries of the area proposed for wilderness.

## RESPONSE TO LETTER 4

1. Your support for the Proposed Action for Marble Canyon and Line Canyon; the All Wilderness Alternative for Fish and Wildlife 1, 2, 3 and Evergreen from the draft document has been noted. Your support for the Partial Wilderness Alternative for Millon Hills, slightly modified from the draft document has also been noted.

2. Chapter 3 - Affected Environment of this final EIS contains the information requested on bighorn sheep winter habitat, raptor and grouse habitats as well as potential elk migration corridors for the Marble Canyon WSA.

Chapter 3 of this Final EIS reflects your comments regarding the Category 2 candidate species.

p. 3-8, Fish and Wildlife Nos. 1, 2, and 3, Threatened and Endangered Species. Pemselmus bicolor sp. ranuus, a Category 2 candidate for Federal listing as an endangered species, is found within Fish and Wildlife #3.

p. 3-11, Line Canyon Wilderness Study Area, Threatened and Endangered Species. The golden bear poppy (Artemesius californicus), a Category 2 candidate, is found within this study area. A silk monster (Heloderma suspectum), also a Category 2 candidate, was sighted on Line ridge in 1900 (Veri Knight, Nevada Heritage Program, Carson City, Nevada, pers. comm.).

p. 3-25, El Dorado Wilderness Study Area, Threatened and Endangered Species. Two Category 2 plants, Pemselmus bicolor sp. ranuus and P. b. sp. bicolor, are found within this study area.

p. 3-35, Evergreen Wilderness Study Area, Supplemental Values. Portions of this study area contain potential habitat for Chrysothamnus eremophilus which has been recommended for Category 2 candidate status.

Chapter 4, Environmental Consequences. Appropriate sections of this chapter should be revised to reflect our comments on Category 2 candidate species.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this document. If you have any questions regarding our comments, please contact Mary Jo Eilers at PDS 470-5227 or 702-784-5227.

*Richard J. Navarre*

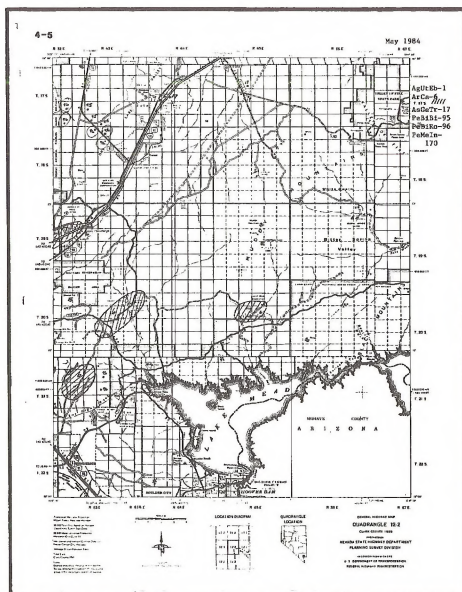
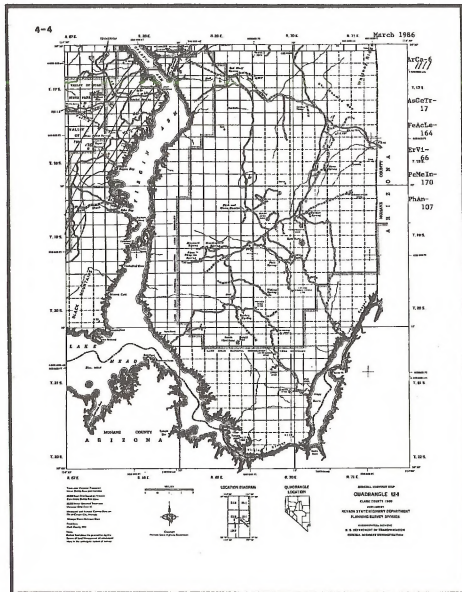
Enclosures

cc: Environmental Protection Agency, San Francisco, CA  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Regional Office, Portland, OR  
Division of Endangered Species and Habitat Conservation,  
Branch of Federal Activities, EPA (EKT), Washington, DC  
Nevada Department of Wildlife, Reno and Las Vegas, NV

#### RESPONSE TO LETTER 4

- Appropriate sections in Chapter 4 - Environmental Consequences of this Final EIS reflects your comments.







## United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

WESTERN REGION

430 GOLDEN GATE AVENUE, BOX 34003  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94103

IN REPLY REFER TO:

L7619 (WR-RP)

June 30, 1988

## Memorandum

To: District Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Las Vegas,  
NevadaFrom: Associate Regional Director, Resource Management and  
Planning, Western RegionSubject: Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement for Nevada  
Contiguous Lands (DES-88/34)We have reviewed the above referenced document and have the  
following comments regarding cultural resources:

1. The document does not satisfactorily address cultural resources or applicable legislative mandates and compliance procedures. Historic resources and Native American concerns are not addressed. Also, the DEIS does not indicate consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) or provide a SHPO opinion regarding wilderness designation. This consultation should be documented in the final EIS.
2. Wilderness designation does not automatically convey resource protection. While elimination of motorized access and construction activities does have some positive effects, looting and/or vandalism could still occur if the WSAs are open to recreational hikers and horseback riders. The DEIS also does not address certain adverse impacts that can occur even in a wilderness area due to fire management activities, livestock use, road or trail maintenance activities, etc.
3. Archeological sites have been identified in a number of the WSAs, yet it appears they have been dismissed as insignificant and not eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places without an eligibility opinion being solicited from the SHPO.

## RESPONSE TO LETTER 5

1. Cultural Resources as a whole was not an issue addressed in the EIS as it is not expected that impacts occurring from casual or unregulated uses to either known or unknown prehistoric and historic resources located within the WSAs would vary as a result of wilderness designation or nondesignation. The Bureau's responsibility in complying with legislative mandates and procedures for cultural resources has been addressed under "Impacts to Cultural Resources" in Chapter 1. The SHPO has reviewed and commented upon the Draft EIS.
2. All anticipated areas of impact were analyzed in the EIS, based on the best estimates of projected occurrences. No specific impacts to cultural resources were identified and therefore were not analyzed.
3. Inventories of known or unknown cultural sites within the WSAs are conducted on a case by case basis in connection with proposed projects. The findings of significance in any inventories or any actions proposed would be referred to SHPO for their review and concurrence.

4. It also appears that no archaeological survey has been conducted for some of the proposed NSAs. Wilderness designation still requires compliance with Executive Order 11593 responsibilities. Further, once wilderness designation has been accomplished, the costs of survey and inventory could increase.

We appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on this statement.

*Bruce M. Kilgore*

cc:  
IAS  
WASO 762

#### RESPONSE TO LETTER 5

4. Wilderness studies do not constitute a need for automatic survey of prehistoric and historic cultural resources. Neither do NSAs gain priority funding for survey and recordation. Priorities are set by project proposals and for highly sensitive cultural resource areas, which have not been identified in any of the stated NSAs. The Las Vegas District's Management Plan complies with Executive Order 11593, using due caution until the inventory and nomination processes are completed.



## UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

ADDRESS  
215 Fremont Street  
San Francisco, Ca. 94105

08 SEP 1988

Mr. Edward F. Spang  
Bureau of Land Management  
Nevada State Office  
P.O. Box 13000  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89520

Dear Mr. Spang:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) titled NEVADA CONTIGUOUS LANDS WILDERNESS. Our detailed comments on this document are enclosed.

Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, EPA is required to review and comment on this DEIS.

We have classified this DEIS as Category EC-2, Environmental Concerns - Insufficient Information (see attached "Summary of Rating Definitions and Follow-Up Action"). This DEIS is rated EC-2 because it does not: 1) specify how Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) were recommended for wilderness or non-wilderness status or 2) show how state and federal standards for air and water quality would be met.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this DEIS. Please send four copies of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) to this office at the same time it is officially filed with our Washington, D.C. office. If you have any questions, please call me at (415) 974-8083 (FTS 454-8083) or have your staff contact Harriet Hill at (415) 974-8193 (FTS 454-8193).

Sincerely yours,

*Deanna M. Wileman*  
Deanna M. Wileman, Director  
Office of External Affairs

Enclosure (two pages)

cc: USFWS, Reno, Mary Jo Elpers  
NDOH, Reno, Venton Kay

5-22

## COMMENTS

1. The DEIS proposes that only 22,195 acres (11%) of the 200,918 acres of the Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) be designated wilderness. However, it does not adequately explain how these decisions were made, with the result that some appear arbitrary. For example, the majority of the Marble Canyon WSA is said to be "in an extremely natural condition" (p. 3-1), yet less than half of it is recommended for wilderness. There are no apparent conflicts with other uses, as exemplified by the statement that, in the portion of the WSA not recommended for wilderness, "development of marble resources as a result of exploration would likely not occur" (p. 2-1).

The DEIS also states that an all-wilderness alternative "would have no effect on current grazing practices" and that banning motorized vehicles "would have a slight adverse economic impact on the operator" (p. 2-7). Similarly, WSAs such as Million Hills, Garrett Buttes, El Dorado, Irateta Peaks, and Jumbo Springs are noted by the DEIS as having "outstanding opportunities for solitude," "pristine features," "excellent raptor nesting sites," desert tortoise habitat, and an "extremely natural condition." Still, none of these areas are proposed for wilderness although no major constraints appear to exist.

The FEIS should specify how BLM applies its criteria for recommending wilderness or non-wilderness status. State how final land use decisions are made when there are major and minor conflicts between wilderness values and resource/recreation potential.

2. We are especially concerned about the decision to propose non-wilderness status for the four WSAs that provide crucial habitat for the desert tortoise. This species was recently recommended for category 1 status for federal listing as an endangered species (M. Elpers, pers. comm., U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service). In particular, the non-designation of the three Fish and Wildlife WSAs is expected to have direct impacts on almost 200 acres of crucial habitat. Indirect impacts on this habitat could be substantially greater but are not discussed. Wilderness designation of the Fish and Wildlife WSAs and the Evergreen WSA would protect tortoise habitat from off-road vehicles. It would also create a significant refuge, since the Fish and Wildlife WSAs are adjacent to the Desert National Wildlife Range, a proposed wilderness area.

The FEIS should:

A. Recommend the Fish and Wildlife and Evergreen WSAs for wilderness status or fully justify why they do not qualify as such.

5-33

RESPONSE TO LETTER 6

1. The purpose of the EIS, as defined in NEPA, is to "provide full and fair discussion of significant environmental impacts and shall inform decisionmakers and the public of reasonable alternatives..." "It shall be used by Federal Officers in conjunction with other relevant materials to plan actions and make decisions". (p. 10 CEQ Regulations - 40 CFR 1500-1508)

As this EIS is an analytical document, the rationale for the decisions will not be addressed. The rationale for the final decisions will be written into the Record of Decision, which in the case of Wilderness is the Wilderness Study Report that is signed by the Secretary of the Interior.

6-3

EPA COMMENTS ON NEVADA CONTIGUOUS LANDS DEIS, SEPTEMBER 1968

- 2 | B. Discuss the indirect impacts of non-wilderness designa-  
tion on the desert tortoise population.
- 3 | 3. We believe that air quality and water quality of adjacent  
lands will be best preserved by wilderness status. The DEIS does  
not address impacts to air and water quality which could occur in  
or near the WSA acreage not recommended for wilderness. The FEIS  
should do the following.
- 4 | A. Describe how future projects and activities (mining,  
utilities, railroads, and off-road vehicle use) in non-designated  
WSA acreage will meet federal and state air quality requirements.
- 5 | 1) BLM must manage undesignated areas to comply with the  
federal Clean Air act, which prohibits taking any federal action  
which is not consistent with the State Implementation Plan for  
air quality (42 U.S.C. 7506(c)).
- 6 | 2) BLM must ensure that air quality increments estab-  
lished under the Prevention of Significant Deterioration (PSD)  
program are not violated and that PSD permitting requirements are  
satisfied.
- 4 | B. Discuss management measures to protect water quality and  
wetland habitats in or near all WSAs.
- 6 | C. State that non-wilderness designation could adversely im-  
pact air and water quality, whereas wilderness designation could  
benefit air and water quality.

## RESPONSE TO LETTER 6

- The appropriate sections in Chapter 4 of this final EIS have been rewritten to reflect your comment.
- These projects and activities proposed to occur within the areas not recommended for wilderness designation, would have to meet Federal and State air quality requirements. With any new proposal or action in the future will come site-or-project-specific environmental analysis. This would include air and/or water quality effects and mitigation measures, if appropriate.
- Water sources within the WSAs, except for the Lanontan Cutthroat Trout Natural Area, are extremely limited or nonexistent. Most of the sources consist of seeps or springs. During the preparation of the Wilderness EIS there were no activities proposed for the WSAs that were found to impact either the quantity or quality of the water sources as a result of designation or nondesignation.
- Water and air quality were not issues discussed in the EIS, as no action under designation was of such significance to warrant analysis.

BLM is bound by the same parameters to uphold water and air quality whether the area is wilderness or not wilderness. It would be presumptuous of this document to state that wilderness would provide this kind of protection as no documentation is available to support such a position.

### Environmental Impact of the Action

#### ED--Lack of Objections

The EPA review has not identified any potential environmental impacts requiring substantive changes to the proposal. The review may have disclosed opportunities for application of mitigation measures that could be accomplished with no more than minor changes to the proposal.

#### EC--Environmental Concerns

The EPA review has identified environmental impacts that should be avoided in order to fully protect the environment. Corrective measures may require changes to the preferred alternative or application of mitigation measures that can reduce the environmental impact. EPA would like to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts.

#### ED--Environmental Objections

The EPA review has identified significant environmental impacts that must be avoided in order to provide adequate protection for the environment. Corrective measures may require substantial changes to the preferred alternative or consideration of some other project alternative (including the no action alternative or a new alternative). EPA intends to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts.

#### ED--Environmentally Unsatisfactory

The EPA review has identified adverse environmental impacts that are of sufficient magnitude that they are unsatisfactory from the standpoint of environmental quality, public health or welfare. EPA intends to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts. If the potential unsatisfactory impacts are not corrected at the final EIS stage, this proposal will be recommended for referral to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ).

### Adequacy of the Impact Statement

#### Category 1--Adequate

EPA believes the draft EIS adequately sets forth the environmental impact(s) of the preferred alternative and those of the alternatives reasonably available to the project or action. No further analysis or data collection is necessary, but the reviewer may suggest the addition of clarifying language or information.

#### Category 2--Insufficient Information

The draft EIS does not contain sufficient information for EPA to fully assess environmental impacts that should be avoided in order to fully protect the environment, or the EPA reviewer has identified new reasonably available alternatives that are within the spectrum of alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS, which could reduce the environmental impacts of the action. The identified additional information, data, analyses, or discussion should be included in the final EIS.

#### Category 3--Inadequate

EPA does not believe that the draft EIS adequately assesses potentially significant environmental impacts of the action, or the EPA reviewer has identified new, reasonably available alternatives that are outside of the spectrum of alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS, which should be analyzed in order to reduce the potentially significant environmental impacts. EPA believes that the identified additional information, data, analyses, or discussions are of such a magnitude that they should have full public review at a draft stage. EPA does not believe that the draft EIS is adequate for the purposes of the NEPA and/or Section 309 review, and thus should be formally revised and made available for public comment in a supplemental or revised draft EIS. On the basis of the potential significant impacts involved, this proposal could be a candidate for referral to the CEQ.

\*From EPA Manual 640, "Policy and Procedures for the Review of Federal Actions Impacting the Environment."



## STATE OF NEVADA



RICHARD H. BRYAN  
Governor

JEAN FORD  
Director

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES  
Capital Complex  
Carson City, Nevada 89710  
(702) 885-4420

September 7, 1988

Mr. Edward F. Spang  
State Director  
Nevada State Office  
Bureau of Land Management  
P.O. Box 12000  
Reno, Nevada 89520-0006

Re: SAI NV #8830013      Project: Governor's Consensus  
Review - Contiguous Lands  
Wilderness

Dear Mr. Spang:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Preliminary Wilderness Recommendation for Nevada Contiguous Lands.

After careful review of the thirteen Wilderness Study Areas and one instant study area, which are analyzed in the draft report, the State concurs with the recommendation presented in the document.

We do, however, wish to express our concern about the declining desert tortoise habitat in the southern part of the State. The three Wilderness Study Areas identified as Fish and Wildlife Numbers 1, 2 and 3 contain crucial tortoise habitat which must be protected. They are also rather small areas and have some potential for sand and gravel mining, a growing need in the Las Vegas metropolitan area. These factors render these areas less than ideally suited for wilderness designation. We do, however, urge the Bureau to utilize some other mechanism to ensure the protection of the crucial tortoise habitat in this area, taking also into consideration the needs of the urban area for access to sand and gravel.

JEH:TRH

Mr. Edward F. Spang  
September 7, 1988  
Page 2

This constitutes the State's consensus position on this draft document. For your information, we have attached additional comments prepared by the Nevada Departments of Agriculture and Wildlife, the BNR Bureau of Mines, and the Division of Historic Preservation/Archeology. We appreciate the opportunity to comment and will look forward to seeing your response to our concerns.

Sincerely,

Jean Ford  
Director

JF/drc  
cc: Governor Richard Bryan  
Roland Westergaard, DCHN  
Bly District Manager-BLM  
Las Vegas District Manager-BLM  
Winnemucca District Manager-BLM

## NEVADA STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES  
1100 EAST WILLIAM, SUITE 110  
CARSON CITY, NEVADA 89710  
865-3187

FROM: John S. Walker, Coordinator

## TO:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Governor's Office</li> <li>— Community Services</li> <li>— State Job Training Office</li> <li>— Administration</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture</li> <li>— Economic Development</li> <li>— Education</li> <li>— Employment Security Department</li> <li>— Human Resources</li> <li>— Aging Services</li> <li>— Health Division</li> <li>— Legislative Counsel Bureau</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Welfare</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Nuclear Waste Project Office</li> <li>— Prisons</li> <li>— Public Service Commission</li> <li>— SOCC</li> <li>— State Communications Board</li> <li>— Tourism</li> <li>— Utilities</li> <li>— Transportation</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UN-Bureau of Mines</li> <li>— UN-Library-DO, Publications</li> <li>— UN-Dept. of Energy, Wildlife and Forestry</li> <li>— Wild Horse Question</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wildlife</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Conservation and Natural Resources</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Director's Office</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environmental Protection</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forestry</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic Preservation and Archeology</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State Parks</li> <li>— Water Resources</li> </ul>
---	---	---

SAL BY # 88300013 PROJECT: Draft EIS - Nevada Continuous Lands RNM

## RE:

Wilderness Proposal

Attached for review and comment is a copy of the aforementioned project. Please evaluate it with respect to: 1) the program's effect on your plans and programs; 2) the importance of its contribution to State and/or area-wide goals and objectives; and 3) its accord with any applicable laws, orders or regulations with which you are familiar with.

PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR COMMENTS NO LATER THAN 8/5/88. Type your comments if applicable, check the appropriate box below and return the form to this office. Please do so even if you have no comment on this project. If you are unable to comment by the prescribed date, please notify this office. Reviewers may substitute this form with agency letterhead. If letterhead is used, please cite the SAL number listed above.

## THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY REVIEWING AGENCIES

— No comment on this project  
— Proposal supported as written  
☒ Additional information (see below)

— Denial desired (see below)  
☒ Conditional support (see below)  
— Disapproval of funding  
(must specify reason below)

## CLEARINGHOUSE REVIEW

Upon receipt of your comments, per the deadline, the Clearinghouse, in cooperation with State Lands, will request a RNM briefing and will host a consensus meeting after the briefing.

## ACTION COMMENTS (see additional sheets if necessary)

The Department of Agriculture supports the Draft Wilderness Environment Impact Statement with the proposed Action Alternatives except for Marble Canyon and Line Canyon WSAs. Our only objection is the lack of AMPs for these WSAs which would insure permanent legal information to the permittee regardless of time and transfer.

RECEIVED ON

AUG 4 1988

*[Signature]*  
Reviewer's Signature

Regional Coordinator  
Title

866-74689  
Phone

7/29/88  
Date

## RESPONSE TO LETTER 7

1. Marble Canyon - There are three allotments located within the Marble Canyon WSA and all of them have allotment management plans (AMPs). These allotments are Nancy Creek, Smith Creek and Devil's Gate.

Line Canyon - A range allotment evaluation was completed for the Gold Butte Allotment (encompassing Line Canyon WSA) in 1988. An allotment management plan (AMP) for the area is scheduled for completion in 1990. The AMP will address the portion of the Line Canyon WSA recommended suitable for wilderness designation. This portion of the AMP will be prepared in accordance with the Wilderness Management Policy.



STATE OF NEVADA  
DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE

1700 Valley Road  
P.O. Box 10575

Reno, Nevada 89520-0022  
(702) 788-0500

RICHARD H. BRYAN  
Governor

WILLIAM A. MOORE  
Director

August 31, 1988

Mr. John B. Walker, Coordinator  
State Clearinghouse  
Office of Community Services  
1100 East William, Suite 118  
Carson City, NV 89710

RE: SAI NV #88300013

Dear John:

Thank you for the opportunity to review BLM's Nevada Contiguous Lands Wilderness Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Our comments on the document follow.

In general, we support the preferred alternative presented by BLM. That is, to recommend portions of the Marble Canyon WSA and Lime Canyon WSA for wilderness designation.

We have some serious concerns for the habitat of the desert tortoise in southern Nevada. Designation of the three Fish and Wildlife WSA's would protect an area of crucial tortoise habitat. We recognise the need for a utility corridor along the highway there as well. Moving the WSA boundaries to the west enough to accommodate the utility corridor would not leave much of the three WSA's for inclusion as wilderness. We feel that some form of special consideration and protection for the crucial tortoise habitat in the area of the three Fish and Wildlife WSA's is indicated, however. We would like to see the area west of Highway 93 receive special management. Perhaps the area west of the proposed utility corridor could be given to USFWS for inclusion in the Desert National Wildlife Refuge.

We would like to take this opportunity to commend BLM for including statements in the EIS that clarify the ability of wildlife managers to develop and maintain wildlife waterers in WSA's and future wilderness areas.

RESPONSE TO LETTER 7

2. Your support for a Partial Wilderness Alternative recommending a portion of Fish and Wildlife 1, 2, and 3 WSAs suitable for wilderness designation, primarily for the preservation of crucial desert tortoise habitat, has been noted.

Mr. John B. Walker  
August 31, 1988  
Page 2

If I can provide any additional information or answer any questions, please let me know.

Sincerely,

*Willie*  
William A. Molini  
Director

FRK:DE:COB:pw

cc: Regions

## NEVADA STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

OFFICE OF CONSERVATION SERVICES  
1100 EAST WILLIAM, SUITE 118  
CARSON CITY, NEVADA 89710  
725-5187

FROM: John B. Walker, Coordinator

TO:

<input type="checkbox"/> Governor's Office	<input type="checkbox"/> Nuclear Waste Project Office	<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation and Natural Resources
<input type="checkbox"/> Community Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Prisons	<input type="checkbox"/> Director's Office
<input type="checkbox"/> State Job Training Office	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Service Commission	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State Lands
<input type="checkbox"/> Administration	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCC	<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Protection
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> State Communications Board	<input type="checkbox"/> Forestry
<input type="checkbox"/> Economic Development	<input type="checkbox"/> Tourism	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic Preservation
<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Archeology
<input type="checkbox"/> Employment Security Department	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wilderness of Means	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State Parks
<input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNR Library-Gov. Publications	<input type="checkbox"/> Water Resources
<input type="checkbox"/> Aging Services	<input type="checkbox"/> UNR-Dept. of Range, Wildlife, and Forestry	
<input type="checkbox"/> Health Division	<input type="checkbox"/> Wild Horse Commission	
<input type="checkbox"/> Legislative Counsel Bureau	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wildlife	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minerals		

SAL # 88300013

PROJECT: Draft FWS - Nevada Continuous Lands BLM

BY Willie

Wilderness Proposal

Attached for review and comment is a copy of the aforementioned project. Please evaluate it with respect for: 1) the project's effect on your plans and programs; 2) the importance of its contribution to State and/or area-wide goals and objectives; and 3) its accord with any applicable laws, orders or regulations with which you are familiar with.

PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR COMMENTS NO LATER THAN 9/5/88. Type your comments if applicable, check the appropriate box below and return the form to this office. Please do so even if you have no comment on this project. If you are unable to comment by the prescribed date, please notify this office. Reviewers may substitute this form with agency letterhead. If letterhead is used, please cite the SAL number listed above.

## THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY REVIEWING AGENCY

<input type="checkbox"/> No comment on this project	<input type="checkbox"/> Conference desired (see below)
<input type="checkbox"/> Proposal supported as written	<input type="checkbox"/> Conditional support (see below)
<input type="checkbox"/> Additional information (see below)	<input type="checkbox"/> Disapproval of funding
	<input type="checkbox"/> (Just specify reason below)

## CLEARINGHOUSE NOTES:

Upon receipt of your comments, per the deadline, the Clearinghouse, in cooperation with State Lands, will request a BLM briefing and will host a consensus meeting after the briefing.

AGENCY COMMENTS (use additional sheets if necessary)

*See attached sheet.*

*Willie*  
Reviewer's Signature

*Willie*  
Title

*NRMC*

*788-6671*  
Phone

*9/19/88*  
Date

June 29, 1988

TO: John Walker  
Office of Community Services

FROM: J. V. Tingley

SUBJECT: SAI #9030013  
Draft EIS - Nevada Contiguous Lands Wilderness Proposal

Non-wilderness designation is recommended by the BLM for 12 of the 14 areas described in this EIS. This designation will not affect utilization of the mineral potential of the areas and I support the BLM position.

The BLM has recommended partial wilderness designation for the two remaining areas, Marble Canyon (NV-040-086) in White Pine County, and Line Canyon (NV-050-231) in Clark County.

**Marble Canyon:** The area recommended for wilderness is the southeastern portion of the original MSA and excludes areas of high and moderate mineral potential shown on the BLM-generated mineral potential map in section 3 of the EIS. This map and the discussions of mineral potential in the text, however, only address potential for marble. There are indications that the southeastern part of the MSA may have potential for undiscovered metallic mineral resources. Work in the U. S. Forest Service Mount Moriah Roadless Area, immediately south of the BLM MSA, outlined an area of moderate mineral potential for lead and zinc which may project north into the BLM area. This area of the Snake Range is geologically complex and is the site of both thrust and detachment faulting. These structures have been proven in other areas to be favorable for deposition of precious metal deposits. Undiscovered deposits of lead, zinc, and precious metals could be concealed beneath thrust faults and younger rocks within the portion of the MSA recommended for wilderness designation.

**Line Canyon:** The Mineral Favorability map prepared by the BLM (included at the end of section 3 of the EIS) indicates that the entire area has moderate mineral favorability for nonmetallic minerals. The proximity of known mineral resources to the boundary of the recommended suitable portion of the MSA indicates that valuable resources may exist within the recommended area.

#### RESPONSE TO LETTER 7

3. Marble Canyon - The USGS/Bureau of Mines mineral report has yet to be finalized and received by the BLM. The boundary recommendations in the draft EIS are preliminary and will be reassessed upon receipt of the final mineral report and substantive comments received during the public comment period.
4. Line Canyon - The USGS/Bureau of Mines comprehensive minerals report will be reviewed and considered before the final recommendation for the Line Canyon MSA is made.

## NEVADA STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

JUN 13 1988

FROM: John G. Walker, Coordinator

TO:

☐ Governor's Office  
☐ Community Services  
☐ State Job Training Office  
☐ Administration  
☒ Agricultural  
☐ Economic Development  
☐ Education  
☐ Employment Security Department  
☐ House Resources  
☐ Aging Services  
☐ Health Division  
☐ Legislative Counsel Bureau  
☒ Minerals

☐ Nuclear Waste Project Office  
☐ Prisons  
☐ Public Service Commission  
☐ SOG  
☐ State Communications Board  
☐ Taxation  
☐ Tourism  
☐ Transportation  
☒ U.S. Bureau of Mines  
☐ U.S. Library-Low, Publications  
☐ University of Reno, Wildlife  
☐ and Forestry  
☐ Wild Horse Question  
☒ Wildlife

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES  
1500 EAST WILLIAM, SUITE 110  
CARSON CITY, NEVADA 89710  
885-5187

Observation and Natural Resources

☒ Director's Office  
☒ State Lands  
☐ Environmental Protection  
☒ Forestry  
☒ Historic Preservation  
☐ and Archeology  
☒ State Parks  
☐ Water Resources

SAI BY # 88300013

PROJECT: Draft EIS - Nevada Contiguous Lands ELM

Wilderness Proposal

Attached for review and comment is a copy of the aforementioned project. Please evaluate it with respect to:  
 1) the program's effect on your plans and programs; 2) the importance of its contribution to state and/or area-wide goals and objectives; and 3) its accord with any applicable laws, orders or regulations with which you are familiar with.

PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR COMMENTS NO LATER THAN 6/5/88. Type your comments if applicable, check the appropriate box below and return the form to this office. Please do so even if you have no comment on this project. If you are unable to comment by the prescribed date, please notify this office. Reviewers may substitute this form with agency letterhead. If letterhead is used, please cite the SAI number listed above.

## THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY REVIEWING AGENCY:

☐ No comment on this project  
☐ Proposal supported as written  
☐ Additional information (see below)

☐ Conference desired (see below)  
☐ Conditional support (see below)  
☐ Disapproval of funding  
☐ (must specify reason below)

## CLEARINGHOUSE REVIEW:

Upon receipt of your comments, per the deadline, the Clearinghouse, in cooperation with State Lands, will request a ELM briefing and will host a consensus meeting after the briefing.

AGENCY COMMENTS: (see additional sheets if necessary)

Please see attached memorandum.

RECEIVED CN

APR 13 1988

RECEIVED

*Oliver M. Becker*  
 Reviewer's Signature

Staff Archeologist  
Title

(702) 885-5138 8/2/88  
Phone Date

RICHARD H. EVAN  
Secretary

STATE OF NEVADA

BILAND D. WESTERGAARD  
State Historic Preservation Officer



## DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES

DIVISION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND ARCHEOLOGY

201 S. Fall Street  
 Capitol Complex  
 Carson City, Nevada 89710  
 (702) 885-5138

August 2, 1988

## MEMORANDUM

TO: John Walker, Office of Community Services

THROUGH: Pam Wilcox, State Lands

FROM: Alice M. Becker, Staff Archeologist *Oliver M. Becker*SUBJECT: Draft EIS - Nevada Contiguous Lands Wilderness Proposal  
SAI NV88300013

The National Register of Historic Places has been checked; properties listed on the Register are not located within any of the areas discussed. Unfortunately, as has been repeatedly pointed out by this office, very little information on the nature of cultural, historic and archeological properties exists in areas considered for wilderness in Nevada. Therefore, the effects of designation or non-consideration on historic properties cannot be assessed.

The Division recommends that any proposals for wilderness or partial wilderness designation contain stipulations for archeological and historic inventories to identify such properties. Further, Native Americans with interests in these areas should be interviewed to determine whether conflicts exist under the provisions of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act.

If you have any questions regarding these comments please call us.

AMB/eb

RECEIVED CN

APR 13 1988

RECEIVED



RESPONSE TO LETTER 7

5. The BLM's wilderness study process did not initiate an automatic survey of prehistoric and historic cultural resources. Neither do the Wilderness Study Areas gain priority funding for survey and recordation. Cultural resource priorities, surveys/inventories, and sensitivities would be addressed in the Wilderness Management Plans developed for areas designated as wilderness.

6. The Nevada Contiguous Lands Draft Wilderness EIS was sent to the following Native American councils with no response:

Intertribal Council of Nevada  
Winnemucca Indian Colony  
Ely Indian Colony  
Ft. Mojave Tribal Council  
Las Vegas Tribal Council  
Summit Lake Paiute Tribe  
Moapa Paiute Tribal Council

7-10

RICHARD H. REEVES  
Governor

STATE OF NEVADA

RICHARD L. REVEREN  
Director



DEPARTMENT OF MINERALS

600 W. King Street, Suite 104  
Carson City, Nevada 89716  
(702) 885-5000

NEVADA CONTIGUOUS LANDS DRAFT E.I.S. HEARINGS - PUBLIC TESTIMONY

August 3, 1988

The Nevada Department of Minerals appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Nevada Contiguous Lands Wilderness Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The Department of Minerals supports the B.L.M. in its decision to withdraw the following wilderness study areas from further wilderness consideration:

Fish and Wildlife Numbers 1,2, and 3  
Million Hills  
Garrett Buttes  
Quail Springs  
El Dorado  
Teeteba Peaks  
Jumbo Springs  
Nellis ABC  
and Evergreen ABC.

All of the above-mentioned WSA's have sufficient mineral resource potential to warrant being left open for possible exploration and development. The El Dorado and Teeteba Peaks WSA's are adjacent to the El Dorado (Nelson) and Searchlight mining districts, where significant gold and silver mining has occurred. Jumbo Springs also has potential for precious metals.

Portions of Clark County, as well as other areas in Nevada, have been targeted for energy resource exploration due to favorable geologic features. Fish and Wildlife No. 1 and Evergreen ABC have oil and gas potential, while Quail Springs and Nellis ABC have geothermal energy potential.

Fish and Wildlife Numbers 1, 2, and 3, Quail Springs, and Nellis ABC all have sand and gravel potential. As sand and gravel operations in Las Vegas are shut down due to depletion or encroachment by urban areas, some of these outlying deposits may be utilized.

As the minerals industry is the second largest industry in the state, and as Nevada is a leading mining state, resource potential must be addressed when considering the management of public lands. It is the responsibility of the Nevada Department of Minerals to advocate the responsible development of the state's mineral and energy resources. The Department recommends the multiple-

STATE OF NEVADA  
DEPARTMENT OF MINERALS  
Las Vegas Office  
State Mall Complex  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89168

000



## DEPARTMENT OF MINERALS

400 W. King Street, Suite 186  
Carson City, Nevada 89710  
(702) 885-5058

## NEVADA CONTIGUOUS LANDS DRAFT E.I.S. HEARING - PUBLIC TESTIMONY

August 3, 1968

Page 2

use concept for public lands where significant resource potential exists. Therefore, the Nevada Department of Minerals supports the B.L.M. in its decisions on the Nevada Contiguous Lands wilderness study areas.

Respectfully submitted;

Walter S. Lombardo  
Consultant  
Las Vegas Office

STATE OF NEVADA  
DEPARTMENT OF MINERALS  
Las Vegas Office  
State Mail Complex  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89158

10770

## RESPONSE TO LETTER 7

7. Support of the Proposed Action for the Draft EIS has been noted.

DARRELL L. TAYLOR  
Chairman  
TEBEAU PIQUET  
Vice Chairman  
SABRYE USALDE  
Member

Humboldt County  
Board of Commissioners

TONYA PEARSON  
Administrative Assistant  
COURTHOUSE  
WINNEMUKCA,  
NEVADA 89445  
(702) 863-4300

September 8, 1988

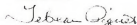
Janaye Byergo,  
EIS Team Leader  
P.O. Box 26569  
Las Vegas, NV 89126

The Humboldt County Commissioners at their regularly scheduled meeting of September 8, 1988, discussed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement Preliminary Wilderness Recommendation for Nevada Contiguous Lands that was prepared by the Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management. The Board felt that they should address the Lahontan Cutthroat Natural Area (ISA), and agreed with the recommendation that this area should not be designated a Wilderness area.

The Board based their decision on the fact that there is a large amount of deeded land in this particular area, the fact that it borders the Summit Lake Indian Reservation, and the fact that being designated a wilderness area could eliminate some access to the Lahontan Cutthroat Habitat, which is the last of two such fisheries. The Board also expressed their concern about the elimination of the line camps for cowboys and hunters in this area, the concern about the wild horses throughout the area, and the cost to police the area should it be designated a wilderness area.

The Board would again concur with the recommendations of the Bureau of Land Management in their assessment of this area, and would like to thank you for the opportunity to address this matter.

Sincerely,



Tebeau Piquet, Vice Chairman  
Humboldt County Commissioners

RESPONSE TO LETTER 8

Your support for the Draft EIS's Proposed Action has been noted, especially for the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout ISA.



## WESTERN SHOSHONE NATIONAL COUNCIL

7.5 Box 18  
Helena, Montana 59601  
(208) 825-8227

TREATY OF RUBY VALLEY

In 1863 the United States entered into a solemn Treaty of Peace and Friendship with the Western Shoshone Nation. The Treaty of Ruby Valley recognizes the existence of the Western Shoshone Nation and its right to occupy its ancestral lands in Nevada. This Treaty has never been violated by the United States, and it has never been abrogated by the United States. The Treaty does not cede any Western Shoshone lands to the United States.

Title to Western Shoshone ancestral lands has never been legally extinguished. The attempt to establish a wilderness area within Western Shoshone territory by any agency of the United States Federal Government is premature. Should you wish to proceed with your plans to establish this wilderness area within the Western Shoshone ancestral lands, contact the real owners of this land, the Western Shoshone Nation.

Submitted By:

Western Shoshone National Council

Attachment: Ruby Valley Treaty  
Western Shoshone Imp

## Treaty of Ruby Valley 1863

Treaty between the United States of America and the Western Bands of Shoshone Indians. Concluded October 1, 1863. Ratification advised, with amendment, June 28, 1865. Amendment assented to June 17, 1867. Proclaimed October 2, 1869.

OLYSSSES S. GRANT, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, TO ALL WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME, GREETINGS:

Whereas a Treaty was made and concluded at Ruby Valley, in the Territory of Nevada, on the first day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty three, by and between James W. Nye and James Danze Duty, Commissioners, on the part of the United States, and To-mook, Mo-ho, Kirk-awedgwa, To-mag, and other Chiefs, Principal Men, and Warriors of the Western Bands of the Shoshone Nation of Indians, on the part of said bands of Indians, and duly authorized thereto by them, which Treaty is in the words and figures following to wit:

Treaty of Peace and Friendship made at Ruby Valley, in the Territory of Nevada, this first day of October, A.D. one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, between the United States of America, represented by the undersigned Commissioners, and the Western Bands of the Shoshone Nation of Indians, represented by their Chiefs and Principal Men and Warriors as follows:

## ARTICLE I

Peace and friendship shall be hereafter established and maintained between the Western Bands of the Shoshone nation and the people and Government of the United States; and the said bands stipulate and agree that hostilities and all dependencies upon the emigrant trains, the mail and telegraph lines, and upon the citizens of the United States within their country, shall cease.

## ARTICLE II

The several routes of travel through the Shoshone country, how or hereafter used by the white men, shall be forever free, and undisturbed by all emigrants and travelers under its authority and protection, without molestation or injury from them. And if depredations are at any time committed by bad men of their nation, the offenders shall be immediately taken and delivered up to the proper officers of the United States, to be punished as their officers shall deserve; and the safety of all travelers passing peaceably over either said routes is hereby guaranteed by said bands.

Military posts may be established by the President of the United States along said routes or elsewhere in their country; and station houses may be erected and occupied at such points as may be necessary for the comfort and convenience of travelers or for the mail or telegraph companies.

## ARTICLE III

The telegraph and overland stage lines having been established and operated by companies under the authority

of the United States of America through the Shoshone country, it is expressly agreed that the same may be continued without hindrance, molestation, or injury from the people of said bands, and that their property and the lives and property of passengers in the stages and of the employees of the respective companies, shall be protected by them. And further, it being understood that provision has been made by the government of the United States for the construction of a railway from the plains west to the Pacific ocean, it is stipulated by said bands that said railway or its branches may be located, constructed, and operated, and without molestation from them, through any portion of country claimed or occupied by them.

## ARTICLE IV

It is further agreed by the parties hereto, that the Shoshone country may be explored and prospected for gold and silver, or other minerals, and when mines are discovered, they may be worked, and mining and agricultural settlements formed, and ranches established whenever they may be required. Mills may be erected and timber taken for their use, as also for building or other purposes in any part of the country claimed by said bands.

## ARTICLE V

It is understood that the boundaries of the country claimed and occupied by said bands are defined and described by them as follows:

On the north by Wing-wag-gah Mountains and Shoshone River Valley; on the west by So-noo-to-yah Mountains or South Creek Mountains; on the south by Wi-so-bah and the Colorado Desert; on the east by To-ho-so-ba Valley or Sheep-cow Valley and Great Salt Lake Valley.

## ARTICLE VI

The said bands agree that whenever the President of the United States all deem it expedient for them to abandon the roaming life, which they now lead, and become herdsmen or agriculturalists, he is hereby authorized to make such reservations for their use as he may deem necessary within the country above described and they shall hereby agree to remove their camps to such reservations as he may indicate, and to reside and remain therein.

## ARTICLE VII

The United States, being aware of the inconveniences resulting to the Indians in consequence of the driving away and destruction of game along the routes travelled by white men, and by the formation of agricultural and mining settlements, are willing to fairly compensate them for the same, therefore, and in consideration of the preceding stipulations, of their faithful observance by the said bands, the United States promise and agree to pay to the bands of the Shoshone nation parties hereto, annually for the term of twenty years the sum of two thousand dollars, in such articles, including cattle for herding or other purposes, as the President of the United States shall deem suitable for their wants and condition, either as hunters or herdsmen. And the said bands hereby acknowledge the receipt of the said stipulated annuity as a full compen-

## TREATY CONT.

sofism and equivalent for the loss of game and the rights and privileges hereby cancelled.

## ARTICLE VIII.

The said bands hereby acknowledge that they have received from said commissioners provisions and clothing amounting to one thousand dollars as presents at the conclusion of this treaty.

Done at Ruby Valley the day and year above written.

JAMES W. NYR  
JAMES DUANE DOTY  
TE-MOAK  
MO-HO-A  
KIRK-WEEDGWA  
TO-NAG  
TO-SO-WEES-SO-OP  
SOW-ER-E-GAH  
TO-ON-GO-SAH  
PAH-A-WOAT-ZE  
GA-HA-DIER  
KO-RO-KOUT-ZE  
PON-GE-MAB  
BUCK

## Witnesses:

J.B. MOORE, Lt. Col. and INJ. Cal. Vol.  
JACOB T. LOCKHART, Indian Agent Nev. Ter.  
HENRY BUTTERFIELD, Interpreter

And whereas, the said Treaty having been submitted to the Senate of the United States for its constitutional action thereon, the Senate did, on the twenty-sixth day of June, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-six, advise and consent to the ratification of the same, with an amendment, by a resolution in the words and figures following, to wit:

## IN EXECUTIVE SESSION SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

June 26, 1866.

Resolved, (two-thirds of the Senators present concurring,) That the Senate advise and consent to the ratification of the Treaty of peace and friendship made at Ruby Valley, in the Territory of Nevada, the first day of October, A.D. one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, between the United States of America, represented by the Commissioners, and the Western Bands of the Shoshone Nation of Indians, represented by their Chiefs and Principal Men and Warriors, with the following

## AMENDMENT:

Fill the blank in the 8th article with the word five.

Attest:

J.W. FORNEY  
Secretary

And whereas, the foregoing amendment having been fully explained and interpreted to the undersigned Chiefs, Principal Men, and Warriors of the Western Bands of the Shoshone Nation of Indians, they did, on the seventeenth day of June, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-six, give their free and voluntary assent to the said amendment, in the words and figures following, to wit:

Whereas the Senate of the United States, in executive session, did advise and consent to the ratification of the Treaty of peace and friendship, made at Ruby Valley, in the Territory of Nevada, on the first day of October, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, by the Commissioners on the part of the United States and the Western Bands of the Shoshone Nation of Indians, represented by their Chiefs and Principal Men and Warriors, with the following amendment:

"Fill in the blank in the 8th article with the word five."

And whereas the foregoing amendment has been fully interpreted and explained to the undersigned Chiefs and Principal Men and Warriors of the aforesaid Western Band of the Shoshone Nation of Indians, we do hereby agree and assent to the same.

Done at Ruby Valley, Nevada, on this 17th day of June, A.D. 1866.

Attest: J.H. DAWLEY  
R.B. SCOTT  
W.R. REYNOLDS  
LOUIS GRINNELL, Interpreter

TIM-OCK  
BUCK  
FRANK  
TO-NAG

Now, therefore, be it known that I, ULYSSES S. GRANT, President of the United States of America, do, in pursuance of the advice and consent of the Senate, as expressed in its resolution of the twenty-sixth of June, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-six, accept, ratify and confirm the said Treaty, with the amendment aforesaid.

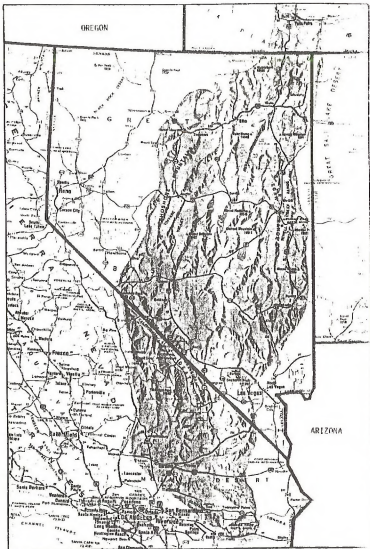
In testimony whereof, I have hereunto signed my name, and have caused the seal of the United States to be affixed. Done at the city of Washington, this twenty-first day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the ninety-fourth.

By the President:  
HAMILTON FISH  
Secretary of the State.

U.S. GRANT

WESTERN  
SHOSHONE  
LANDS

WESTERN  
SHOSHONE  
NATIONAL  
COUNCIL



RESPONSE TO LETTER 9

Your comment is appreciated and has been noted.

10

## BEST IN THE DESERT RACING ASSOCIATION

Bureau of Land Management  
Nevada Contiguous Lands EIS  
4765 Vega Drive  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89108

Attention: Janaye Byergo

Dear EIS Manager:

What a superb draft document for wilderness. The proposed action for the El Dorado WSA will exclude the existing race courses from further study. This will enable us to resume our past use of this very important corridor.

Wilderness is a management tool useful where multiple use will benefit from this designation. Those areas which are still wild and those areas with unique qualities and resources may be better managed with wilderness designation. Those portions of Lime Canyon and Marble Canyon appear to have those qualities. Best in the Desert notes the wildness of the river drainage side of El Dorado and Iretaba Peaks but believe proper management will be accomplished with your proposed action. This same confidence is expressed in your proposed action on Million Hills, Garrett Buttes and Jumbo Springs.

Fish and Wildlife 1, 2, & 3, Evergreen, Nellis, and Quail Springs do not have any wilderness qualifications. Any further study of these lands would be a waste of taxpayer money.

This draft EIS is accurate, well balanced and unbiased. The evaluation of our public lands with the goal of proper management is often lost in the boisterous and slanted rhetoric of the opposing philosophical ideals. Those that argue from a polemic position do a disservice to these, our public lands. I often read the mindless attacks against any wilderness. These actions are answered by the arm chair environmentalist whose approaches wilderness with a religious zeal. It was refreshing to read, in this draft EIS, actions proposed on examination of the facts. Wilderness designation should be a management tool, not an issue. The preparers of this document are true public servants. They all deserve our congratulations.

Sincerely,

Casey Folks



RESPONSE TO LETTER 10

Support of the Proposed Action for the Draft EIS has been noted.

11-1 THE  
DESERT TORTOISE COUNCIL



539 Cerritos Avenue  
Long Beach, California 90805

August 18, 1988

Mr. Edward F. Spang, State Director  
U.S. Bureau of Land Management  
P.O. Box 12000  
Reno, Nevada 89520

Dear Mr. Spang:

The Desert Tortoise Council (DTC) has reviewed the Nevada Contiguous Lands Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and has found that several of the proposed actions in that document are not consistent with State and Federal goals for the protection and management of desert tortoises.

The desert tortoise is protected by State law in Nevada (NRS 501.110, 501.181, NAC 503.080) and is listed as a sensitive species in the Master Memorandum of Understanding between the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Nevada Department of Wildlife. In September of 1984 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) was petitioned to list the species as endangered throughout its range. Disruption and loss of suitable habitat were the primary factors contributing to the decline of this species according to the supporting documentation which accompanied the petition. On September 18, 1985, the USFWS issued a finding that "listing of the desert tortoise throughout its range is warranted, but precluded by other pending proposals of higher priority".

According to BLM Manual 6840 - Threatened and Endangered Wildlife, Section 6840.31 - Basic Intent, "It is the intent of the sensitive animal concept to recognize species that clearly merit special attention in BLM planning and decision-making processes." This section goes on to say that the fundamental objective of developing a list of sensitive species is, "to maintain or increase current population levels of sensitive animals through early habitat protection or enhancement. In such cases, effective and aggressive programs will help to minimize the chance of official listing of the animals..."

August 18, 1988

Clearly, the proposed actions outlined in the Draft Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement, dated June 8, 1988, are contrary to this identified BLM management objective. In particular, the proposals not to designate any of the four proposed wilderness areas in the Coyote Springs Valley (i.e. Fish and Wildlife 1 - 2 and Evergreen ABC) are inexcusable. If these actions were to proceed as proposed according to the EIS, this would result in the direct destruction of 2501 acres of crucial desert tortoise habitat and "adverse impacts" would occur on 44,603 acres of crucial tortoise habitat. Obviously, the BLM can't hope to meet its stated objective of maintaining or increasing current population levels under this proposed set of actions. In fact, identical statements occur in the EIS under each of these proposed actions which state that each of these actions, "would create a serious habitat fragmentation of the last stronghold for the Las Vegas/Coyote Springs Valley desert tortoise gene pool. This fragmentation of habitat could, over the long-term, result in the loss of this crucial population... Long-term negative impacts to the desert tortoise population could occur under the proposed action". Again, it seems perfectly obvious that the proposed actions are contrary to BLM's official objective for managing sensitive species through "effective and aggressive programs (which) will help to minimize the chance of official listing..."

Under the All Wilderness Alternatives for these four areas, according to the EIS, there will still be a direct loss of habitat of at least 412 acres. Not quantified in the EIS, but of some importance, is the ensuing habitat fragmentation and disturbance which would accompany this loss of habitat. The fact that this much habitat loss and disturbance is bound to occur attests to the fact that wilderness designation doesn't preclude multiple use management in any of the areas being considered and easily complies with multiple use mandates provided for in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) while still allowing BLM to approach its objectives for protecting sensitive species.

The proposed action for no wilderness in the Million Hills area is similarly contrary to BLM policy for the management of sensitive species. The conclusions for both the proposed action and Alternative A - Partial Wilderness - state that, "an estimated 20 acres out of the WSA's 1800 acres of crucial desert tortoise habitat would be lost to projected oil and gas exploration and increased cross country motorized vehicle use". The conclusion listed under the "impacts on crucial desert tortoise habitat" section for the all wilderness alternative states that, "Designation of the WSA would enhance the protection of the 1800 acres of crucial desert tortoise habitat". This alternative is consistent with the stated policy to manage sensitive species "to maintain or increase current population levels...through early habitat protection and enhancement".

## RESPONSE TO LETTER 11

1. The Environmental Impact Statement is an analytical document designed to provide Managers with a tool for managing multiple uses on the public lands. Therefore, the most reasonably foreseeable impacts were identified and analyzed in the Draft EIS. The management actions identified in the Draft EIS may or may not occur within the Wilderness Study Areas. With any new proposal or action in the future will come site-specific, population-specific and individual on-the-ground management actions which would be addressed and developed in individual site-specific activity plans, such as Habitat Management Plans for wildlife, Allotment Management Plans for livestock, AEC Management Plans for special areas, etc. The analysis would include sensitive species effects and mitigation measures.

The BLM recognizes the sensitivity of the desert tortoise and has taken many positive actions to preserve and protect this species within the framework of multiple-use management. Most recently, the Bureau of Land Management has adopted a four State (Newada, Utah, California, and Arizona) rangewide plan for desert tortoise habitat management on the public lands ("Desert Tortoise Habitat Management On The Public Lands: A Rangewide Plan"). This Rangewide Plan provides objectives and management actions to be used by the Bureau to improve the status of the tortoise on public lands. The Rangewide Plan sets a stage for planning, research, awareness, and public and constituent coordination and cooperation. The Rangewide Plan however, allows each participating State to address their specific management problems and resource conflicts through the development of state-level desert tortoise habitat management implementation strategies/plans.

# RESPONSE TO LETTER 11

2. As defined in the Multiple Use and Classification Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-607), "multiple use" constitutes a "use of some of the land for less than all of the resources". Under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, wilderness preservation is part of BLM's multiple-use mandate, and wilderness values are recognized as part of the spectrum of resource values and uses to be considered in the inventory and land-use planning process. In keeping with this concept, the Wilderness Management Policy allows for specific actions to occur and the utilization of certain resources within the designated wilderness areas while restricting other uses in order to insure the protection of the wilderness resource. Thus, "multiple use management" allows BLM to discriminate and protect the numerous resources and features that exist on public lands through a variety of designations, plans and protective efforts.

The projected loss of tortoise habitat under the All Wilderness Alternative for the three USAs would come about only if the Nevada Department of Transportation chooses to exercise their 'Valid Existing Rights' for identified sand and gravel material sites. Under the Wilderness Management Policy, "Valid Existing Rights or private rights existing as of the date an area was designated as wilderness will be recognized."

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The stated purpose of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) which required the preparation of this EIS is, "To declare a national policy which will encourage productive and enjoyable harmony between man and his environment; to promote efforts which will prevent or eliminate damage to the environment and biosphere and stimulate the health and welfare of man; to enrich the understanding of the ecological systems and natural resources important to the Nation; and to establish a Council on Environmental Quality". Furthermore, in Section 102 of NEPA, Federal agencies are directed that, "the policies, regulations, and public laws of the United States shall be interpreted and administered in accordance with the policies set forth in this Act". If BLM's policy for the management of sensitive species' habitats does not provide sufficient guidance to mandate the protection of the areas discussed above, it seems that this national policy in conjunction with BLM policy surely must.

Although NEPA allows for a certain amount of environmental damage to occur where the benefits to man are substantial, the information presented in this EIS contains no economic analysis or other justification for these proposed actions. It is implied that the mere potential, no matter how remote, for the discovery of minerals in these areas, and an unquantified and unproven demand for motorized recreation in these areas is enough to nullify BLM's commitment, clearly outlined in BLM policy, to protect and enhance sensitive species' habitat. We believe that if the BLM chooses this course of action, then it will be in violation of the mandate quoted above which requires that all BLM policies be interpreted and administered in accordance with policies set forth in NEPA.

The DTC hereby requests that all the "All Wilderness Alternatives" be adopted in the five areas discussed in this letter. If the BLM chooses not to adopt this course of action, we expect a full explanation of how this apparent circumvention of BLM policy and a Congressionally mandated national policy can possibly be justified. An explanation is certainly to contained in the EIS.

We look forward to your reply. We request a response to the above as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

*Glenn Stewart*

Glenn Stewart  
Board of Directors

cc: Defenders of Wildlife  
Wilderness Society  
NRDC  
Jayne Byergo  
Barla Kramer - USFWS  
DTC Board members

# RESPONSE TO LETTER 11

3. The purpose of the EIS, as defined in NEPA, is to "provide full and fair discussion of significant environmental impacts and shall inform decisionmakers and the public of reasonable alternatives..." "It shall be used by Federal Officers in conjunction with other relevant materials to plan actions and make decisions". (p. 10 CEQ Regulations - 40 CFR 1500-1508)

As this EIS is an analytical document, the rationale for the decisions will not be addressed. The rationale for the final decisions will be written into the "Record of Decision", which in the case of Wilderness is the Wilderness Study Report that will be signed by the Secretary of the Interior.

## FREEPORT-McMoRan GOLD COMPANY

A Subsidiary of Freeport-McMoRan Inc.

6110 Plumas Street  
P.O. Box 41530  
Reno, Nevada 89504  
Phone (702) 828-3000  
TWX 910-366-7028  
FAX (702) 826-7902

July 11, 1988

Mr. Ed Spang  
State Director, Nevada  
Bureau of Land Management  
Nevada State Office  
P.O. Box 12000  
Reno, NV 89520

Dear Mr. Spang:

This letter is in response to the Nevada Contiguous Lands Draft Environmental Impact Statement issued in June, 1988.

The Lime Canyon WSA (NV-050-231) has 13, 895 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness designation. Freeport is currently exploring in the area and has discovered gold potential in and near the pre-cambrian exposures. Mineralization may be related to detachment surfaces which have recently been recognized as economically significant for gold production.

We would request that the entire area be dropped from consideration for wilderness and be reclassified as unsuitable.

If we can supply you with further information about the area, please contact me at the above address.

Sincerely,

*Marsha L. Berkbigler*  
Marsha L. Berkbigler  
Government Affairs Coordinator

MLB:jrc

RESPONSE TO LETTER 12

The U.S. Geological Survey will prepare a comprehensive, detailed, joint report with the Bureau of Mines on the mineral resource potential within the recommended suitable portion of the Line Canyon NSA. This report will be reviewed and considered before a final recommendation for the Line Canyon NSA is made.

RECEIVED  
SEPT 8 5 54 AM '80  
S RA-344

Goshute M/C Club  
5400 Maxwell  
Las Vegas, Nevada  
89120  
September 16th, 1980

Bureau of Land Management  
Nevada Contiguous Lands EIS  
4765 Vegas Drive  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89106

Subject: Draft Nevada Contiguous Lands Wilderness EIS

Dear Mr. Janey Dwyer:

The Goshute Motorcycle Club is an off-road motorcycle racing club with 35 members ranging in age from 10 to 23 years old. The belief of our club is that these lands recommended for wilderness designation should reflect the intention of the Wilderness Act of 1964. There is wording in the act that we feel have often been neglected. Section 2, part (b) states that lands selected "...shall continued to be managed...", while section 2, part (c) notes that these lands "...shall be administered for the use and enjoyment of the American people..." with the caveat in part (b) that there should be no appropriations for additional permanent "... solely for the purpose of managing..." lands because of their inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System. The important point is that these lands must continue to be managed. When the best management for the land in question is determined to be wilderness designation, then our club supports that strategy. Those that support or reject the lands are doing a disservice to the American People.

The Goshute M/C appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Draft Nevada Contiguous Lands Wilderness EIS. Our club is satisfied that the "...use and enjoyment of the American people..." and the continued management of these public lands has been addressed in this draft EIS. We are happy to see the land and its management, and not a political opinion of either an emblematic environmentalist or commercial exploiter, reflected in this appraisal of wilderness characteristics of these lands. We offer our approval of this work.

The Goshute M/C does not believe that outstanding opportunities for solitude can be found in Fig. A, Sine 80-1, 2, 3 or the Quail Springs NSA. We agree that the inner core, including Line Canyon, of the Line Canyon NSA has unique equilibria, has natural protection that affords outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and therefore we concur with your recommendations for a partial inclusion of the Line Canyon NSA. We are happy to see the lands around the Nelson Dam have been excluded. The Goshute M/C will support protection for the riverine drainage of El Dorado and Irvine Peaks. This protection can be accomplished within RFP or BNA processes. BNP will protect these lands until the next update of the management plan. While the Goshute supported partial inclusion of the El Dorado and Irvine Peaks NSA's at the scoping meetings, our concerns for the continued management of these lands, and their proper management, can be addressed without wilderness designation.

The Goshute M/C club will support the recommended alternative in each instance. We are pleased and convinced that the best option for management of our lands is reflected in these recommendations.

Sincerely

*Lee T. Ziegler*  
Lee Ziegler  
Secretary

Motorcycle Racing  
Association of Nevada  
34750 Boulder Highway  
Las Vegas, Nevada  
89121  
September 5th, 1988

Bureau of Land Management  
Nevada Contiguous Lands EIS  
4765 Vegas Drive  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89108

Attention: Janaye Byergo

Dear EIS Manager:

Congratulations on an excellent document. The Motorcycle Racing Association of Nevada (MRAN) would like to offer these comments. MRAN does not find opportunities for outstanding solitude in Nellis, Evergreen, or F&G 1,2,3. MRAN is glad that the recommendations for El Dorado exclude from further consideration the existing motorcycle race courses and heavily impacted lands on the west portion of the area.

MRAN wishes to thank you for your allowing us to participate in the scoping process. We are heartened to see many of our members' suggestions included in the draft EIS. MRAN notes that while those lands within the heart of Iretaba Peaks would no longer have IMP protection, there is no immediate threat to these lands. The next time we update the MPP for Clark County, MRAN will support management practices that will assure continued naturalness of these lands.

Wilderness should only be a management tool for areas which offer outstanding opportunities for naturalness, for solitude, and/or have unique qualities that the preservation of is in the best interest of the public. Lime Canyon may be such a unique geological form. We defer to the White Pine County Commission on Marble Canyon, and accept your recommendation on Iretaba Peaks and El Dorado. MRAN must applaud your courage to reject those lands that obviously don't meet the intention of the Wilderness Act. Further dilution of the quality of lands in the Wilderness Preservation System is not warranted. The proposed actions reflect a management effort which demonstrates detailed analysis and the proper balance of resource protection, utilization and preservation. We offer our thanks for a job well done.

Sincerely,

*Mike Kinshella*  
Mike Kinshella  
MRAN President

#### RESPONSE TO LETTER 13

Support of the Proposed Action for the Draft EIS has been noted.

#### RESPONSE TO LETTER 14

Support of the Proposed Action for the Draft EIS has been noted.





## SIERRA CLUB

Las Vegas Group of TOiyabe CHAPTER  
P.O. Box 19777, Las Vegas, Nevada 89119

September 14, 1988

Bureau of Land Management  
Las Vegas District Office  
P. O. Box 26569  
Las Vegas, NV 89126  
ATTN: Wilderness DEIS Team Leader

Dear Janaye:

We are writing to submit our comments on the Nevada Contiguous Lands Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). We have some general comments on the entire process, and then some specifics regarding each of the areas.

As we mentioned in our letter of October 9, 1987 (copy enclosed) regarding the Scoping Plan for this EIS, we do not agree with the Bureau of Land Management that the criterion of manageability is important in evaluating an area for wilderness status. However, we pointed out that increased manageability would result for each of these areas if other agencies designated adjacent lands as wilderness. Furthermore, "linking" the wilderness status of the contiguous lands to the wilderness status of adjacent lands could well provide meaningful management boundaries visible on the ground, rather than solely as lines on a map. In an ecological sense, it is important to keep a biological unit together and manage it appropriately. It is for these reasons that we feel great emphasis should be put on evaluating the status of the adjacent lands--yet the DEIS barely mentions this factor. We feel this issue should be fully explored in the Final EIS.

Regarding Marble Canyon (NV040-086): We favor the proposed action for this WSA. It is contiguous with the Humboldt National Forest proposed wilderness, which has high potential of being designated by Congress as wilderness. Furthermore, it has low mineral potential. The attractive scenery and excellent naturalness and opportunities for primitive recreation provide ample justification for its designation as wilderness. Furthermore, the area provides critical habitat for bighorn sheep, especially in the winter when the adjacent National Forest lands are too cold due to their higher elevations. The exclusion of lands on the western portion of the WSA has resolved potential conflicts and provides a reasonable wilderness boundary.

We favor the All Wilderness Alternative for Fish and Wildlife Nos. 1, 2, and 3 (NV050-201, NV050-216, and NV050-217), contingent on the designation of wilderness in the adjacent Desert National Wildlife Refuge. Improved management would result from the establishment of a recognizable boundary at the powerline. The zones of creosote bush in the lower bajada mark this area as transitional between the Mojave Desert and the Great Basin Desert. All three units provide crucial desert tortoise habitat protection. The areas' unspoiled condition and low mineral potential justify designation as wilderness. Furthermore, wilderness designation would have little impact on grazing, and it would provide protection of sensitive species (like the tortoise) and cultural resource sites. Fish and Wildlife No. 2 especially offers rugged terrain which results in excellent opportunities for solitude.

The Line Canyon (NV050-231) proposed action also meets with our approval. This wilderness designation should be contingent on the designation of the adjacent lands as wilderness. By including the entire watershed east of the Overton Area, management of the Lake Mead National Recreation Area (LMNRA) contiguous potential wilderness will be enhanced. The area has low mineral potential. Wilderness will protect quail and bighorn habitat, and we see no significant conflicts with proposed guzler construction and maintenance.

For the Million Hills (NV050-233) we support a different wilderness alternative. We favor wilderness designation for the lands of Alternative A, with wilderness from the western base of Azure Ridge east contingent on designation of the LMNRA contiguous wilderness. This would protect the entire watershed draining to Lake Mead by creating naturally defensible boundaries, especially along the Indian Trail/Million Hills Washes. Bighorn sheep and raptor habitat would be protected. Potential mineral claims west of Azure Ridge would be precluded, yet there would be low impact on grazing allotments. Wilderness designation would protect the "fantastic scenic vistas, secluded spots and unusual geologic features" noted in the DEIS that would "entice visitors for hiking, photography, nature study or backpacking."

For both the Garrett Buttes (NV050-235) and Quail Springs (NV050-411) areas, we agree with the proposed action of no wilderness.

Regarding El Dorado (NV050-423), we favor wilderness designation as per Alternative A, but with the inclusion of the southeastern portion of the area which Alternative A excludes. If both this and the contiguous LMNRA lands are designated as wilderness, we propose incorporation of this area into LMNRA to protect resource values integral to the LMNRA. Wilderness designation of this unit would protect quail and bighorn habitat, unique Oak Creek Canyon, the drainages leading into Gregory Arch, the arch itself,

and the upper entrance to Lonesome Wash. We have drawn our boundary to exclude the exploration zone in the northwest corner to accommodate mineral interests. The low potential for minerals in the southeast corner is outweighed by the exceptional natural values which would be best protected in wilderness. Finally, wilderness designation for this unit would protect it from the especially intrusive potential power corridor which would destroy much of the visual attractiveness of the area.

In the Iretaba Peaks (NV050-438) unit, we favor Alternative A to exclude probable mineral drilling operations. Wilderness designation here would protect watersheds integral with those of the contiguous LMNRA, viewsheds from LMNRA towards the west, bighorn and predator habitat, and quail and tortoise habitat.

We favor the All Wilderness alternative for Jumbo Springs (NV050-236), subject to designation of the LMNRA contiguous wilderness, because the western boundary is a logical natural and defensible feature (ridgeline). Furthermore, wilderness would protect an entire watershed of the LMNRA in the Wells Kitchen area. Protection of bighorn habitat and development of guzzlers could be accomplished and maintained with a minimal impact on wilderness. Few mineral values would be foregone, since the area has low mineral potential in general.

We agree with the proposed action of no wilderness for Nellis ABC (NV-050-048-15).

For Evergreen ABC (NV050-01R-16A, 16B, 16C), we agree with the proposed action of no wilderness only because of potential powerline intrusions. Were it not for these intrusions, we would favor wilderness for these areas, at least for -16A, for the same reasons as given above for Fish and Wildlife Nos. 1, 2, and 3.

Finally, we agree with the proposed action of no wilderness for the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Natural Area. As noted in the DEIS, this is "an outstandingly beautiful area with its running water, large stands of quaking aspen, willow and mahogany tree, lush meadows, colorful rock formations and good populations of wildlife." However, we agree also with the DEIS' assessment that it does not have high wilderness values because of the numerous intrusions of man.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit our comments. We look forward to continuing work with you for eventual Congressional designation of BLM lands as wilderness.

Sincerely,

*Cheri Clinkoske*

Cheri Clinkoske  
Conservation Chair  
Southern Nevada Group

## RESPONSE TO LETTER 15

1. Based on the April, 1995 decision in *Sierra Club vs. Watt* lawsuit, the WSAs were reinventoried to evaluate their wilderness characteristics, not withstanding any contiguous land wilderness proposals. Based on this, recommendations were developed for each individual WSA.

In compliance with NEPA this EIS was completed to analyze effects of designating or not designating these WSAs as wilderness. Manageability is not addressed as an issue.

The known status of the adjacent agencies lands have been identified in Chapter 3 - Affected Environment of this EIS.

2. Your support for the Proposed Action in the Draft EIS for Garrett Buttes, Quail Springs, Nellis ABC, Evergreen, Marble Canyon, Lime Canyon and the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Natural Area has been noted.

Your preference for the All Wilderness Alternative for Fish and Wildlife 1, 2, 3, and Jumbo Springs; and the Partial Wilderness Alternative for Millon Hills, El Dorado, and Iretaba Peaks has been noted.



## FRIENDS OF NEVADA WILDERNESS

P.O. Box 19777 Las Vegas, Nevada 89112 (702) 941-1876  
P.O. Box 26569 Las Vegas, NV 89126 (702) 122-2867  
September 15, 1989

Bureau of Land Management  
Las Vegas District Office  
P. O. Box 26569  
Las Vegas, NV 89126  
ATTN: Wilderness OES Team Leader

Dear Ms. Byergo:

Friends of Nevada Wilderness is a coalition of organizations, representing over 10,000 individuals. Although our primary focus so far has been the passage of a Forest Service wilderness bill for Nevada, our members are concerned about the entire spectrum of wilderness issues in Nevada. We wish, therefore, to comment on the Nevada Contiguous Lands Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

It is our understanding that the primary reason for considering these lands as wilderness is that they are adjacent to lands under the management of other agencies and such adjacent lands are under consideration for wilderness designation. As such, we believe it would be extremely useful if the DEIS were to detail the proposals for the adjacent lands. Too often, the boundaries between agencies are artificial constructs; they have nothing to do with the integrity of the land, its unity in an ecological sense. In many cases, these small BLM parcels are an integral part of the adjacent lands, and wilderness designation could quite reasonably be contingent on the wilderness status of the adjacent lands.

We agree with the proposed action of no wilderness for the following units:

Carrett Buttes (NV050-235)  
Quail Springs (NV050-411)  
Mellis ABC (NV-050-048-15)  
Evergreen ABC (NV050-018-16A, 16B, 16C)  
Labontan Cutthroat Trout Natural Area (15A)

We favor the proposed action of partial wilderness for the Lime Canyon (NV050-231) unit. Here is an example where the designation of wilderness should be contingent on the designation of adjacent lands as wilderness. Such action would enhance manageability, by including the entire watershed east of the Overton Arm.

We favor the wilderness boundaries proposed for Marble Canyon (NV040-036). This area is contiguous with the Humboldt National Forest proposed wilderness, which we are quite sure will be included in a Forest Service wilderness bill for Nevada. Marble Canyon is quite deserving of wilderness status, and it offers superb opportunities for primitive recreation.



## FRIENDS OF NEVADA WILDERNESS

P.O. Box 19777 Las Vegas, Nevada 89112 (702) 941-1876  
P.O. Box 26569 Las Vegas, NV 89126 (702) 122-2867

For Fish and Wildlife Nos. 1, 2, and 3 NV-050-201, NV050-216, and NV050-217, we favor the All Wilderness Alternative, contingent on designation of wilderness in the adjacent Desert National Wildlife Refuge. The areas' unspoiled condition justifies designation as wilderness. Furthermore, such designation will increase the manageability of the adjacent lands by establishing a recognizable boundary at the powerline.

For Million Hills (NV050-233) we support wilderness designation for the lands of Alternative A. However, we also feel that if the Lake Mead National Recreation Area contiguous lands are designated wilderness, there should be wilderness from the western base of Azure Ridge east. Such designation would protect the entire watershed draining to Lake Mead. As noted in the DEIS, this entire area offers fantastic scenery and unusual geology.

We favor wilderness designation for El Dorado (NV050-423) as per Alternative A, with the addition of the southeastern portion of the lands which Alternative A excludes. Designation of this unit as wilderness is vital to protect it from a proposed power corridor.

In the Iretuba Peaks (NV050-438), we favor Alternative A, again to protect watersheds, as well as to protect viewsheds and wildlife habitat.

We favor the All Wilderness alternative for Jumbo Springs (NV050-236), subject to designation of the contiguous lands as wilderness, in order to provide a recognizable western boundary as well as to protect an entire watershed of the Lake Mead National Recreation Area.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the DEIS. We look forward to issuance of the DEIS, as well as the eventual effort to obtain a BLM wilderness bill for Nevada.

Sincerely,

*Lois Segel*  
Lois Segel  
Statewide Chair

## RESPONSE TO LETTER 16

1. The main emphasis of the April, 1985 decision in the Sierra Club vs. Watt lawsuit, was to identify through the Wilderness Inventory Process those roadless public lands that possess wilderness characteristics on their own, withstanding any contiguous lands wilderness proposals.

The BLM complied with this decision by reinventing those lands addressed in this EIS. The reinventory determined that wilderness characteristics were indeed present in those WSAs which contained over 5,000 acres of roadless lands. Wilderness characteristics were not found to be present in those WSAs which contained less than 5,000 acres of roadless lands.

This EIS has been prepared in compliance with NEPA requirement which calls for an analytical document which "provides full and fair discussion of significant environmental impacts and shall inform decisionmakers and the public of reasonable alternatives..."

The known status of the adjacent agencies lands have been identified in Chapter 3 - Affected Environment of this EIS.

2. Your support for the Proposed Action in the Draft EIS for Garrett Buttes, Quail Springs, Hellis ABC, Evergreen, Marble Canyon, Line Canyon and the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Natural Area has been noted.

Your preference for the All Wilderness Alternative for Fish and Wildlife 1, 2, 3, Jumbo Springs; and the Partial Wilderness Alternative for Million Hills, El Dorado, and Inreba Peaks has also been noted.

17

AUGUST 16, 1988

BLM  
LAS VEGAS DISTRICT OFFICE  
P.O. BOX 26569  
LAS VEGAS, NV 89126

DEAR SIR:

I AM in favor of returning the eleven (11) areas you just had the hearing on to Multiple Use. Also, I agree with your recommendation for "No Action/No Wilderness."

I greatly enjoy using Nevada's beautiful deserts & mountains for recreation & relaxation and feel it would be a terrible shame to lock these 11 areas, or any areas, out of public use & enjoyment.

Sincerely yours,  
EDWIN G. ANDREY  
315 So. Casino Center, Apt. B  
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89101  
(702) 384-5764

RESPONSE TO LETTER 17

Your preference for the No Action/No Wilderness Alternative has been noted.

18-1

Elliott E. Bernshaw

P.O. Box 6235  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84106

July 12, 1988

Janaye Byergo, EIS Team Leader  
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)  
Las Vegas District Office  
P.O. Box 26569  
Las Vegas, Nev. 89126

Dear Janaye Byergo:

COMMENTS: NEVADA CONTIGUOUS LANDS WILDERNESS DRAFT E.I.S.

The adequacy of your wilderness recommendations on thirteen WSAs and one ISA is so negative that I am unable to responsibly respond in a constructive manner. Let me say that I so strongly object to your puny wilderness recommendations regarding these 14 areas that I am also writing to the chairmen of the appropriate Congressional public land committees and telling them that your recommendations are so hostile to the concept of wilderness as to be totally useless in deciding the future status of these areas.

Your overall recommendation of wilderness for only 22,000 acres out of a total of 201,000 acres is totally unacceptable. Most of these WSAs are pristine and have high natural values (especially Desert tortoise habitat, etc.); and they generally have minimal commodity resource values (oil & gas, minerals, grazing, timber) and minimal non-wilderness values (ORV recreation, ORV hunting access, powerline corridors, etc.).

I would like to point out to readers of this EIS that six of the WSAs are contiguous to recommended wilderness areas within the Desert National Wildlife Refuge (Evergreen, F&W-1, F&W-2, F&W-3, Nellis and Oasis Springs). See map of this area on another page.

Hostility to the Desert Wildlife Refuge is well known, and your agency apparently refuses to do anything to enhance the recommended wild areas within the refuge. Of your 70,000 acres of WSA bordering the refuge

# RESPONSE TO LETTER 18

1. Your comment is appreciated and has been noted.

18-2

wilderness areas, you cannot in good faith recommend a single acre for similar wilderness (0%). Your hatred of both wilderness and the refuge is beginning to betray you, gentlemen. May these little BLM WSAs have a more fair day in Congress.

I note that another six of your WSAs are contiguous to *recommended wilderness areas* within the **Lake Mead National Recreation Area** (Lime Canyon, Million Hills, Garrett Buttes, Jumbo Springs, El Dorado and Iretaba Peaks). I am less familiar with these areas, but I suspect that your anti-wilderness bias is at play here, too. Of your 98,500 acres of WSA bordering these Lake Mead recommended wild areas, you could only recommend 14,000 acres (14%).

Gentlemen, you really are the national bureau of land mismanagement (BLM), in addition to your historic role as the leftover bureau of livestock and mining (BLM). I hope you enjoy the reputation that your agency has among a growing segment of the knowledgeable public.

Sadly yours,



Elliott Bernshaw

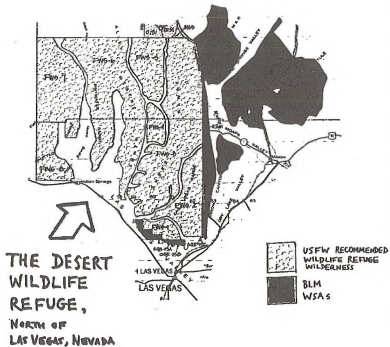
P.S. Copy of letter to BLM Nevada State Office.



RESPONSE TO LETTER 18

2. Your statements which identify the Desert National Wildlife Refuge and the Lake Mead National Recreation Area as being contiguous to twelve of the LGAs are correct. The contiguous areas have been addressed in Chapter 3 - Affected Environment of this Final Wilderness EIS.

18-3



August 26, 1988

Bureau Of Land Management  
Nevada State Office  
P.O. Box 12000  
Reno, Nevada 89506

Draft Environmental Impact Statement  
for Nevada Contiguous Lands, 1988,  
Commentary

Gentlemen:

After carefully reading and analyzing the proposals for the 13 Wilderness Study Areas, my recommendation is for total protection of these lands, or the All Wilderness proposal, as stated in the draft. My concerns focuses on two basic features: Protection of desert tortoises and other floral and faunal habitats, as well as the cultural resources of early people of Nevada; and the opportunity for solitude and backcountry primitive recreation within the unique scenic beauty created by the special geologic features of many of the areas.

During the seven years I lived in Las Vegas, I had the opportunity to visit eight of the proposed Wilderness Study Areas, chiefly by hiking during weekend outings. The geologic qualities exhibited by Marble and Lime Canyons, Ghost Buttes and Millon Hills provides particular scenic areas. The El Dorado Range and Iratze Peaks provide opportunities for fantastic winter/spring hikes despite the urban views at a few isolated points. Fish and Wildlife Areas Nos. 1, 2, and 3, are not of particular scenic value, but the desert tortoise habitat contained within its boundaries demands protection because it is crucial for the survival of the desert tortoise population.

It is my belief that any wilderness that exhibits unique qualities should be protected because there are so few remaining suitable primitive sites. Nevadans have the privilege of preserving truly unique backcountry. Much of the state is unthreatened by the demands of technical development. Once the balance of nature is upset, these affected areas/species can never be recovered. We must act now to insist on preservation for future generations.

Anita A. Bowen, Instructor  
Sparks, Nevada

*Anita A. Bowen*

# RESPONSE TO LETTER 19

Your preference for the All Wilderness Alternative in the Draft EIS has been noted.

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It has come to my attention that the BLM now has various sections of land under study for use as wilderness areas. I would like to go on record as saying that I am against additional areas of land being used as wilderness. The wilderness areas that have already been approved for that purpose are enough.

I believe that the land best serves all of the people as standard public land. Wilderness areas are closed to older people who cannot walk long distances, or cripple people who depend upon their automobile. It is my feeling that wilderness areas discriminate against many of us who cannot use those areas. They are also closed to mining and most other activities that this great nation needs to survive.

Please do not put additional public land into wilderness areas for the good of all of us. Thank you for considering all of our needs, as opposed to just the few who can use wilderness areas.

Sincerely yours,

Brooks  
 3240 W SAMARA  
 LAS VEGAS, NV 89102

Dear sirs:

It has come to my attention that the BLM now has various sections of land under study for use as wilderness areas. I would like to go on record as saying that I am against additional areas of land being used as wilderness. The wilderness areas that have already been approved for that purpose are enough.

I believe that the land best serves all of the people as standard public land. Wilderness areas are closed to older people who cannot walk long distances, or cripple people who depend upon their automobile. It is my feeling that wilderness areas discriminate against many of us who cannot use those areas. They are also closed to mining and most other activities that this great nation needs to survive.

Please do not put additional public land into wilderness areas for the good of all of us. Thank you for considering all of our needs, as opposed to just the few who can use wilderness areas.

Sincerely yours,

DAVIES  
3540 W. SAHARA AVE  
LAS VEGAS, NV 89102

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It has come to my attention that the BLM now has various sections of land under study for use as wilderness areas. I would like to go on record as saying that I am against additional areas of land being used as wilderness. The wilderness areas that have already been approved for that purpose are enough.

Please do not put additional public land into wilderness areas for the good of all of us. Thank you for considering all of our needs, as opposed to just the few who can use wilderness areas.

7125 Spring Rd  
Las Vegas Nevada 89108

It has come to my attention that the BLM now has various sections of land under study for use as wilderness areas. I would like to go on record as saying that I am against additional areas of land being used as wilderness. The wilderness areas that have already been approved for that purpose are enough.

Please do not put additional public land into wilderness areas for the good of all of us. Thank you for considering all of our needs, as opposed to just the few who can use wilderness areas.

Sincerely yours,  
  
 Michael Gelin  
 4800 W. Reno Ave #D  
 LV NV 89118

Bureau of Land Management  
4765 Vegas Drive  
Las Vegas, NV 89108

Dear sir:

It has come to my attention that the BLM now has various sections of land under study for use as wilderness areas. I would like to go on record as saying that I am against additional areas of land being used as wilderness. The wilderness areas that have already been approved for that purpose are enough.

I believe that the land best serves all of the people as standard public land. Wilderness areas are closed to older people who cannot walk long distances, or cripple people who depend upon their automobile. It is my feeling that wilderness areas discriminate against many of us who cannot use these areas. They are also closed to mining and most other activities that this great nation needs to survive.

Please do not put additional public land into wilderness areas for the good of all of us. Thank you for considering all of our needs, as opposed to just the few who can use wilderness areas.

Sincerely yours,

*Paul Guadagnoli*

*8/1/68*

RESPONSE TO LETTERS 20 - 24

Your comment supporting No Wilderness has been noted.

July 22, 1988

United States Department of Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Las Vegas District Office  
P. O. Box 26569  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89126

Attention: Wilderness DEIS Team Leader

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is in reference to your letter dated June 2, 1988, regarding the Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

We are submitting this written testimony in response to the BLM's proposed action on the Mission Hills Wilderness Area.

On April 1, 1923, we were awarded the Oil and Gas Rights to Township 18 South, Range 70 East, Serial # N37612 Nevada Sections 25, 31, 32, and 36; and Township 19S South, Range 71 East, Serial # N42593 Nevada Sections 19 and 20 under the US Government Simultaneous Oil and Gas Lease Lottery. For the past five years, we have paid taxes on this property.

Enclosed are copies of the recorded lease pursuant to these sections.

We are opposed to the BLM's recommendation to designate Mission Hills as an "all wilderness" alternative.

Sincerely,

James D. Horn  
James D. Horn

Leeta M. Horn  
Leeta M. Horn

Enclosures

#### RESPONSE TO LETTER 25

1. Your comment is appreciated. Your oil and gas leases located within the Mission Hills WSA have all been documented in the Final EIS.
2. Your opposition to the All Wilderness Alternative for the Mission Hills WSA has been noted.



Bureau of Land Management  
4765 Vegas Drive  
Las Vegas, NV 89108

Dear sir:

It has come to my attention that the BLM now has various sections of land under study for use as wilderness areas. I would like to go on record as saying that I am against additional areas of land being used as wilderness. The wilderness areas that have already been approved for that purpose are enough.

I believe that the land best serves all of the people as standard public land. Wilderness areas are closed to older people who cannot walk long distances, or cripple people who depend upon their automobile. It is my feeling that wilderness areas discriminate against many of us who cannot use those areas. They are also closed to mining and most other activities that this great nation needs to survive.

Please do not put additional public land into wilderness areas for the good of all of us. Thank you for considering all of our needs, as opposed to just the few who can use wilderness areas.

Sincerely yours,



Nancy Humble  
4460 W Reno Ave #D  
LV NV  
89118

4460 W. Reno Ave #D  
Las Vegas, NV. 89118

Bureau of Land Management  
4765 Vegas Drive  
Las Vegas, NV 89108

Dear sir:

It has come to my attention that the BLM now has various sections of land under study for use as wilderness areas. I would like to go on record as saying that I am against additional areas of land being used as wilderness. The wilderness areas that have already been approved for that purpose are enough.

I believe that the land best serves all of the people as standard public land. Wilderness areas are closed to older people who cannot walk long distances, or cripple people who depend upon their automobile. It is my feeling that wilderness areas discriminate against many of us who cannot use those areas. They are also closed to mining and most other activities that this great nation needs to survive.

Please do not put additional public land into wilderness areas for the good of all of us. Thank you for considering all of our needs, as opposed to just the few who can use wilderness areas.

Sincerely yours,



RESPONSE TO LETTERS 26 - 27

Your comment supporting No Wilderness has been noted.

28

J. B. JACOB  
616 W. 10TH STREET  
MILWAUKEE, WI 53210

7-15-88

Janayne Byergo  
Las Vegas Dist. Office  
P.O. Box 26596  
Las Vegas, NV 89126

Dear Ms (Mr.?) Byergo:

I read in FR of June 17 about your review of  
14 wilderness areas and your intent to recommend only  
1 be put into the Wilderness System.

Good for you! I support this decision,

We have far too much multiple use land currently  
tied up in wilderness. We don't need more.

J.B. Jacob

# RESPONSE TO LETTER 28

Your comment supporting the BLM's recommendation for wilderness under the Proposed Action in the Draft EIS has been noted.

29-1

Robert W. Maichle  
4221 West Arroyo  
Las Vegas, Nevada  
89110-5107  
September 8th, 1988

Bureau of Land Management  
Nevada Contiguous Lands EIS  
4745 Vegas Drive  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89198

Attention: Janaye Brerger

Dear EIS Manager:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Nevada Contiguous Lands Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). This document is excellent for a draft, much better than many final EIS that I have read. I will comment page by page as I reread the document, drawing my conclusions after making my specific comments.

The last line of page s-4 mentions "Outstanding opportunities for solitude" in Fish and Wildlife No. 1. I do not agree that there are any "outstanding opportunities" in the slender section of land adjacent to a well-travelled highway. This same comment may be applied to the first line of the conclusion of the all wilderness proposal on page s-5.

The first paragraph of the conclusion on page s-6 concerning the mentions the presence of "Outstanding opportunities for solitude" in Fish and Wildlife No. 2. I do not agree that there are any "outstanding opportunities" in this narrow section of land parallel to a U.S. highway 93. This same comment must be applied to the first line of the conclusion of the all wilderness proposal on page s-7.

Within the first paragraph of the conclusion on page s-7 concerning the "Outstanding opportunities for solitude" in Fish and Wildlife No. 3, I do not agree that there are any "outstanding opportunities" in this narrow section of land parallel to a U.S. highway 93. This same comment must be applied to the first line of the conclusion of the all wilderness proposal on page s-8.

I highlighted the comment on page s-10 that wilderness values would be retained in 12,915 acres of the Line Canyon area even if the no action alternative was followed. Since this approximates the acreage proposed for inclusion in the Wilderness System, I can assume the boundaries were selected that afford natural protection for this site. This recommendation is close to the recommendation of a fellow club on the Nevada Off Highway Users Council and I am aware of the naturalness and special geological significance of Line Canyon. I applaud your proposed action as opposed to either the all or no alternatives.

The first paragraph of the conclusion on page s-14 notes the "Outstanding opportunities for solitude" in the Quail Springs U.S. These lands within view of the urban blight of Las Vegas, and adjacent to rural sprawl of homes in the northwest portion of the Vegas Valley, do not offer any "outstanding" opportunities. This same comment applies to the first line of the conclusion of the all wilderness proposal on page s-15.

(1)

The first line of comment on the proposed action (s-15) on the El Dorado WSA notes that the wilderness values that exist on 6,600 acres would be diminished. This number plus the 5,690 acres, which would retain their wilderness values without DHP protection, total to the entire area. I do not believe that the lands in the west portion of the WSA possess anything "outstanding" except well traveled ways, race courses and the scattered mess from the Nelson dump. There are about four sections with water drainage toward the El Dorado Dry Lake. These sections are not natural. Since the question of minerals, the inability to fully implement a proposed interpretive program, and the possible hardships to utility users has been raised, I at least understand the reasoning of why the no action alternative was selected over the partial action alternative.

Iretaba Peaks (s-17), I believe the ruggedness of the terrain will preserve the qualities of wilderness in most of the 4800 acres that this document suggest will be diminished. I agree that wilderness values would be retained in the remaining 10,000+ acres, that is, as long as these lands are not invaded by the dreaded bulldozer or other mechanized implements of destruction. I urge protection for these lands under new WFP or RWMA guidelines. I personally want to be contacted before any right-of-way or preventable encroachment occurs on these lands. I am sorry under the recommended proposal, the DHP will no longer protect these lands.

I agree that Jumbo Springs (s-19) will suffer no long term impacts under the proposed no action alternative.

The known cultural resources within the Marble Canyon WSA (1-7) would be better provided for under the proposed action, limiting but not harshly restricting access. While this area does not need additional analysis in this EIS, there are valid concerns for the cultural resources of this area.

The possible cultural resources within the Lime Canyon WSA (1-13) would be better provided for under the proposed action, limiting but not harshly restricting access. While this area does not need additional analysis in this EIS, there are valid concerns for the cultural resources of this area.

There are bighorns in the El Dorado WSA (1-20), the re-establishment of native species under either DHP or Wilderness management need not be addressed.

I question whether there is any off-road use in the Iretaba Peaks WSA as suggested on page 1-22. I am unaware of any use or encroachment on the north or west boundaries. Access to the most of the eastern and southern boundaries is protected by the National Park Service policy on off-road travel. Any use shifted to adjacent lands would be most insignificant.

There are bighorns in the Iretaba Peaks WSA (1-22), the re-establishment of native species under a Wilderness Management Policy is not needed.

The construction of guzzlers within the proposed Lime Canyon action area is addressed on page 2-25. The well being of desert bighorn is wonderful and they enhance the wilderness values of Lime Creek. Some organizations that support bighorn sheep have taken a strong anti-wilderness position. Since specific wording not contained in the Wilderness Act would have to be included in any legislation to allow the continued existence of these slickrock guzzlers, I note the potential conflict. I believe that some enabling legislation is needed. I would like to see this addressed.

## RESPONSE TO LETTER 29

1. The bighorn sheep water developments addressed in the Draft EIS will be implemented in such a way so as to meet those specifications outlined in the Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands Under Wilderness Review and the Wilderness Management Policy. Both documents allow for the implementation and existence of wildlife water developments. Properly planned, designed and located water developments should not need any enabling language within proposed wilderness legislation that would allow for their implementation and existence.

29-3

The construction of guzzlers within the partial and all alternatives of Millon Hills USA is addressed on pages 2-24 and 2-27. A year round bighorn population would benefit this area. Some organizations that support bighorn sheep have taken a strong anti-wilderness position. Specific wording not contained in the Wilderness Act would be needed. This catch-22 coupled with this anti-wilderness position might be used thwart the inclusion of these lands. Please address this in the final document.

1

2

The presence of quail guzzlers (2-42) and future construction of a bighorn guzzler in the Garrett Buttes USA is noted. The value of the Dambel's quail and introduction of bighorn sheep would enhance this area. Are bighorns indigenous to the Garrett Buttes.

The all wilderness alternative for El Dorado USA (2-53) would prohibit organized competitive ORV events. This is a traditional use of this area. The use of existing ways, low impact washes, and the respect these ORV organizations have for the desert resource is why these lands our still being considered. The majority of the hunting and camping as well as the ORV competitive use take place on the portion excluded in the partial alternative. The recreation users should not lose their desert resource because their past use did not eliminate qualities of naturalness.

While about one vehicle per month would be denied access to the Tretaba Peaks USA in the partial alternative on page 2-45, the projection for non-motorized recreational use would increase by two visits per month.

There is no potential for ORV non-speed competition in the Jumbo Springs USA addressed on page 2-69.

The acknowledgement of cultural resources on page 3-4 is sufficient to assure me that this valuable resource will be protected under any BLM management.

The 'outstanding' opportunities for solitude mentioned on page 3-5 do not exist. There is no place within Fish and Wildlife No. 1 where you can escape the visual site and sounds of the trucks and vehicles driving up US 93. While the west side of that range of hills provides visual screening in Fish and Wildlife No. 2, there is no place where you can be as much as 3 miles from a major north-south US highway. There are few places within Fish and Wildlife No. 3 where you can escape the visual impact of the highway but the most distance you can escape the sounds of the highway is three miles in the northwest cornered by a jeep trail. God only knows what additional visual impacts Aerojet-General has planned. The utility corridor, Highway 93 and Aerojet General make the use of the word 'outstanding' questionable. The size must be considered with shape which is on long narrow area paralleling a major north-south US highway.

The more than sufficient description of cultural resources (3-6 & 3-8) in Fish and Wildlife No. 1, 2, and 3 assures me that these areas will be provided for under any BLM management.

The HMP which includes Lime Canon USA (3-11), the Millon Hills USA (3-15), and the Garrett Buttes (3-19), includes references to wilderness and the implications of the Wilderness Management Policy. I would suggest that this document and comment received be reviewed. There were questions raised by comments which would be better addressed in the finalized EIS.

I do not agree that there is any 'outstanding' opportunities for solitude in the Quail Springs USA (3-20).

(3)

## RESPONSE TO LETTER 29

- In recognition of your comment further research noted that all the mountain ranges in the Gold Butte geographical area are not historic bighorn sheep habitat. Therefore, those bighorn sheep water developments proposed within the Garrett Buttes USA would not be implemented if the area is designated wilderness. The Final EIS reflects these changes.
- Chapter 3 - Affected Environment in the Draft EIS identified that a Habitat Management Plan (HMP) would be implemented for the Gold Butte geographical area. Those actions proposed in the HMP that may occur within the MSAs were addressed in Chapters 2 and 3 of the Draft EIS.

As the HMP and the Draft Wilderness EIS are two entirely different documents, any references to comments received on the HMP within this Final EIS would be beyond the scope of the document.

29-4

What is the El Dorado Act mentioned on page 3-23? I question the 470 visits annually (3-23). These areas, was until IMP suspended its use, utilized by 3 or 4 motorcycle races a year. Each motorcycle race had between 100 and 200 participants. The occasional use of off-road motorbiking, hunting and rock-hounding include 4 or 5 visits on each weekend. That is a minimum of 200 visits by competitive ORV racers and a minimum of 400 occasional use on just the weekends. Additional use by sponsoring Motorcycle clubs in seeking courses, weekend driving, and exploring must account for some visits. I believe this area is utilized three times as often as you suggest.

I question the 100 annual vehicle recreation visits to Iretoba Peaks as mentioned on page 3-30. I would think encroachment on the USA, not the use of roads that define the northern USA boundary, would be much less.

The irresponsible camper (3-41) who leaves ruts and tracks in soft damp areas should be controllable with a proper RMA.

The development of two-track routes (4-27), that is the pioneering of new roads within the Gold Butte Area is not allowed as a result of the ORV CRMP. This is reflected in the MFP plan. Those location of roads projected for future mineral development would be coordinated with the BLM and hopefully the least sensitive route would be selected. Cross-country use may increase as result of lack of visible barriers, reduced funding for BLM enforcement, and increased use of the area, however, this unauthorized use is nowhere near 240 visit a year. These same comments go to the cross-country use mention in the Million Hills on page 4-38. I do not believe these is a serious problem, nor that additional use is likely to alter the natural perception. The motorized use mentioned on 4-50 would also be within MFP guidelines.

I do not believe that outstanding opportunities for solitude exist in the Quail Spring USA as mention on 4-52.

The impacts of shifting use (4-62) from the western four section of the El Dorado USA would be significant to motorcycle racing in Southern Nevada. The wash running behind the dump allows a low impact return corridor from the Nelson Hills area. This low-impact corridor is the backbone of many race proposals. Significant impacts would occur if this use was forced elsewhere.

The estimate of 240 vehicle visits (4-63) to the partial alternative may be high. Organized competitive use would not be impacted by the partial alternative.

The last specific comment I have is on page 5-4. If a militant group, sought by the California BLM for actions that endangered the lives of participants in the permitted Barslow to Vegas Race last year, can be listed as an organization, why were all the ORV groups lumped together.

The quality of this draft document is to be commended. The comments I have made on specific points within the draft are minor and represent valid and different points of view. My comments on the proposed action follows:

I will defer to the White Pine County Commission on Marble Canyon. The partial alternative allows for access and provide protection for the cultural resources. I accept your conclusion and support the proposed action.

I wholeheartly agree with your proposed action for Fish and Wildlife No. 1. This area is, in my opinion, void of any quality that would warrant its further study.

(4)

## RESPONSE TO LETTER 29

4. The existing and projected motorized recreational use figures given in the Draft EIS are estimates derived from the best information available to the BLM. Since motorized recreational use has never been monitored or surveys conducted within the USAs, no exact baseline data exists. Therefore, the motorized recreational use projections in the Draft EIS may be somewhat high.

In recognition of your comment, visitor use projections for some of the USAs were adjusted. These adjustments are reflected within the appropriate sections of the Final EIS.

5. The BLM has reassessed the impacts to motorized recreational use within the El Dorado USA under the All Wilderness Alternative. Shifting the use from the USA to nearby public lands would have a marginal impact on motorcycle racing. This is reflected under the "Impacts on Motorized Recreational Use" section in Chapter 4 - Environmental Consequences of this Final EIS.

Competitive motorcycle racing events could be reinstated within the El Dorado USA once the area has been released from the wilderness review process. However, competitive off-road vehicle events would not necessarily utilize the exact same race routes or be reinstated at the same levels that existed within the area prior to the wilderness review process. All off-road events proposed for the El Dorado Valley area, which would include the western portion of the El Dorado USA, would be authorized on a case-by-case basis. Those authorized events would utilize the least impacting course which may or may not encompass the western portion of the USA.

6. Each ORV group that was sent the Draft and Final EIS has been listed separately in Chapter 5 - Public Participation of this document.



29-5

I wholeheartly agree with your proposed action for Fish and Wildlife No. 2. This area does not possess the outstanding qualities that would warrant its further study. Cultural resources must be protected.

I wholeheartly agree with your proposed action for Fish and Wildlife No. 3. This area is, in my opinion, void of any quality that would warrant its further study. Cultural resources will be protected under non-wilderness management.

Line Canyon is a unique area. Your proposed action shows wisdom, providing for access and utilization of the less suitable areas while protecting the truly unique and outstanding qualities of the canyon area. I support this proposed action.

Million Hills will retain its qualities. I accept your conclusion and support the proposed action.

Garrett Buttes is too accessible for wilderness protection. I accept your conclusion and support the proposed action.

Quail Springs just ain't wilderness. Your proposed action shows foresight. I support fully the recommendation that Quail Springs is unsuitable for wilderness designation.

El Dorado has some natural areas on the river side of the WSA. These areas are protected by the terrain. Any action should recognize that the western four sections of this area are not wilderness. The choice between the partial alternative and the proposed action is difficult. My passion for the partial alternative is reduced by the merits of the proposed action. I hope that a future RMA or MFP will retain the primitive and natural qualities of the central core the El Dorados. I accept your conclusion and will support the proposed action.

7

Ireleba Peaks in a special place to me. I wish that justification for the partial alternative had been found. I hope that a future RMA or MFP will retain the primitive and natural qualities of this rugged mountainous area. I still favor the all wilderness or partial wilderness proposal. I can park my motorcycle at the end of the road to Tule sheep and walk 50 yards into the canyon. I find outstanding opportunity for solitude. I find that this area is natural. I find the plant species I seldom see elsewhere unique. I understand the proposed action in the light of multiple use and other resources such as mineral but I cannot endorse this proposal.

Jumbo Springs will retain the qualities. I accept your conclusion and support the proposed action.

I wholeheartly agree with your proposed action for Nellis A, B, and C. This area is, in my opinion, void of any quality that would warrant its further study.

I wholeheartly agree with your proposed action for Evergreen A, B, and C. This area does not possess the outstanding qualities that would warrant its further study.

I agree with the proposed action for the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Natural Area. The needed protection for this land can be accomplished with a good resource management plan.

I appreciate be given the opportunity to comment on this draft EIS. The whole crew deserves congratulations on a excellent job.

Sincerely,

Bob M. Jones

## RESPONSE TO LETTER 29

7. Your support for the Proposed Action in the Draft EIS for Fish and Wildlife 1, 2, 3, Line Canyon, Million Hills, Garrett Butte, Quail Springs, El Dorado, Jumbo Springs, Nellis ABC, Evergreen, and the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Natural Area has been noted.

Your nonsupport of the Proposed Action for Ireleba Peaks has also been noted.

Dear Sir:

7/15/88

I'm in support of all additional areas in your wilderness environmental impact statement being made the all wilderness alternative. especially areas important to the desert tortoise. Thank you

Sincerely,  
Robert Meloy  
7004 CARMEN BLVD.  
LAS VEGAS, NV 89120  
CAS

# RESPONSE TO LETTER 30

Your support for the All Wilderness Alternative in the Draft EIS has been noted.

Bureau of Land Management  
4765 Vegas Drive  
Las Vegas, NV 89108

Dear sir:

It has come to my attention that the BLM now has various sections of land under study for use as wilderness areas. I would like to go on record as saying that I am against additional areas of land being used as wilderness. The wilderness areas that have already been approved for that purpose are enough.

I believe that the land best serves all of the people as standard public land. Wilderness areas are closed to older people who cannot walk long distances, or cripple people who depend upon their automobile. It is my feeling that wilderness areas discriminate against many of us who cannot use these areas. They are also closed to mining and most other activities that this great nation needs to survive.

Please do not put additional public land into wilderness areas for the good of all of us. Thank you for considering all of our needs, as opposed to just the few who can use wilderness areas.

Sincerely yours,

*Douglas C. Stalard*

D + N  
4560 W. Paradise Ave  
LV NV 89118

Bureau of Land Management  
4765 Vegas Drive  
Las Vegas, NV 89108

Dear sir:

It has come to my attention that the BLM now has various sections of land under study for use as wilderness areas. I would like to go on record as saying that I am against additional areas of land being used as wilderness. The wilderness areas that have already been approved for that purpose are enough.

I believe that the land best serves all of the people as standard public land. Wilderness areas are closed to older people who cannot walk long distances, or cripple people who depend upon their automobile. It is my feeling that wilderness areas discriminate against many of us who cannot use these areas. They are also closed to mining and most other activities that this great nation needs to survive.

Please do not put additional public land into wilderness areas for the good of all of us. Thank you for considering all of our needs, as opposed to just the few who can use wilderness areas.

Sincerely yours,

*W. H. R. Oden*

6255 W. Tropicana  
#277

L.V. NV. 89103

RESPONSE TO LETTER 31

Your comment supporting No Wilderness has been noted.

RESPONSE TO LETTER 32

Your comment supporting No Wilderness has been noted.

23 August 1988

To Whom it may concern,

I am writing in reference  
to the August 3rd BLM Wilderness  
Hearings.

I want to say clear in  
favor of returning the 11 WSAs  
mentioned to multiple use status.  
I and my husband have been  
prospecting and mining for fifteen  
years. We very much support  
a clean environment but we  
do not believe in locking the  
American public out of their lands.

Sincerely,

Joe & Kathy Robertson  
3325 N. Nellie Rd.  
#186  
Lao Vegas NV. 89115

## RESPONSE TO LETTER 33

Your comment supporting the Proposed Action in the Draft EIS has been noted.

34

2921 NE 53rd Street  
Lighthouse Point, Florida 33064  
September 11, 1988

Bureau of Land Management  
Nevada State Office  
P.O. Box 12000  
Reno, Nevada 89520

Dear BLM:

Regarding the Nevada Contiguous Lands Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement, I support the All Wilderness Alternative for all fourteen areas. This would add 200,918 acres to the National Wilderness Preservation System. I lived in Reno, Nevada for twenty years. These areas should be preserved as wilderness for their scenic, recreational, wildlife, and primitive values. Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

*Rich Secord*  
Rich Secord

5-6-9

RESPONSE TO LETTER 34

Your comment supporting the All Wilderness Alternative in the Draft EIS has been noted.

35

ON	10/1
ADM	10/1
PLD	10/1
US	10/1
REC	10/1
OW	10/1
EC	10/1
CH	10/1
INT	10/1
CH	10/1

Bureau of Land Management  
4755 Vegas Drive  
Las Vegas, NV 89108

Dear sirs:

It has come to my attention that the BLM now has various sections of land under study for use as wilderness areas. I would like to go on record as saying that I am against additional areas of land being used as wilderness. The wilderness areas that have already been approved for that purpose are enough.

I believe that the land best serves all of the people as standard public land. Wilderness areas are closed to older people who cannot walk long distances, or cripple people who depend upon their automobile. It is my feeling that wilderness areas discriminate against many of us who cannot use those areas. They are also closed to mining and most other activities that this great nation needs to survive.

Please do not put additional public land into wilderness areas for the good of all of us. Thank you for considering all of our needs, as opposed to just the few who can use wilderness areas.

Sincerely yours,

*James L. Anderson*  
376 5<sup>th</sup> ST "217"  
ELKO NV 89801

RESPONSE TO LETTER 35

Your comment supporting No Wilderness has been noted.

36-1

JOHN R. SWANSON  
P. O. Box 100  
Manassas, Va. 22040

September 1, 1988  
Bureau of Duck Management  
P.O. Box 12,000  
Ft. Belvoir, WA 98006

Dear Sirs:

Please accept my comments concerning --

Preserving Wilderness as Terrestrial Biome. Alaska, Continental U.S.,  
North American Wetlands, and Wetlands -- 33 pp.

I am sympathetic with such areas as are considered in the report. Wetlands  
and wetlands preserve the rich wilderness study areas contain  
wilderness values as remnants of certain natural significance.  
A small, high plateau, unique forest and biologic resources that justify  
protection, and all life, on this unique peak, with their  
wilderness study area preserving a vital refuge for them, and forest life,  
on the same high forest.

In this, one of the more important wilderness study areas,  
containing all operations of such areas, and one of the most important  
of all these areas, be dedicated by Congress as wilderness and added  
to our National Wilderness Preservation System, and to include some  
305,000 acres as dedicated wilderness.

Preserving our wilderness  
means preserve our America!

Sincerely,

John R. Swanson.



JOHN R. SANCHEZ

P. O. Box 4112

Chattanooga, Tenn. 37402

September 14, 1988

Division of Duck Management MAF

Washington, D.C. 20517

Dear Sirs: Please

Enclosed

Please accept my comments concerning the

Wilderness Study Area, and the Wilderness Study Area

Study Report and the Draft EIS. I am

convinced that the Draft EIS is a very good document and that it

provides a very good overview of the area and the

proposed action. I am particularly impressed with the

discussion of the potential impacts of the proposed action

on the area and the potential impacts of the proposed

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## RESPONSE TO LETTER 36

Your comment supporting the All Wilderness Alternative in the Draft EIS has been noted.

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## ORAL TESTIMONY

## Responses to Oral Testimony

### Response #1 - James D. Horn (page 5-82)

The existence of your oil and gas leases within the Million Hills WSA have been identified in the Final EIS.

### Response #2 - Geoff Arnold, Vicroy Gold Corporation (page 5-89)

Mining activities occurring on public lands have to conform to the State's air quality regulations. The Wilderness Management Policy states BLM's policy which is to manage wilderness areas in compliance with the existing state air quality classification for each specific areas.

### Response #3 - Ray Irwin (page 5-98)

BLM policy towards wilderness management prohibits the development of buffer zones.

### Response #4 - David Hennen (page 5-99)

BLM's policy for management of both Wilderness Study Areas and future designated wildernesses will allow for the emergency use of vehicles in the event of fire or other natural disaster.

# ORIGINAL

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

REGARDING

NEVADA CONTIGUOUS LANDS DRAFT E.I.S. HEARING

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Taken on Wednesday, August 3, 1988

At 7:15 P.M.

At The Clark County School District Auditorium

2832 E. Flamingo Road

Las Vegas, Nevada

Reported by: Patti Fernandez, C.S.R. No. 129

American Federal Stenographers

301 E. Clark Avenue, Suite 916  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89101  
702-382-1878

## APPEARANCES:

### BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST	JOHN CHAPPELL
WILDERNESS SPECIALIST	LINDA HANSEN
WILDERNESS SPECIALIST	SHARON NETHERTON
ARCHAEOLOGIST	BRIAN AMME
TEAM LEADER FOR NEVADA	JANAYE DYERGO
CONTIGUOUS LANDS WILDERNESS	
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT	

### SPEAKERS

1. Mr. Lombardo	12. Max Christiansen
2. Connie Sinkins	13. Harlan Miller
3. Curtiss Robinson	14. Samee Cordova
4. Harry Pappas	15. James Kasajian
5. Robert Maichle	16. Dorsey Stewart
6. Richard Wyman	17. Perry Dickerson
7. Charles Luzier	18. Ray Buckland
8. Jerry Barker	19. Geoff Arnold
9. James Horn	20. Wayne Sayer
10. Bryant Robinson	21. Dell Robinson
11. Phillip Henderson	

American Federal Stenographers

301 E. Clark Avenue, Suite 916  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89101  
702-382-1878

1 LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

AUGUST 3, 1988

(Whereupon the hearing was called  
to order)

6 MR. CHAPPELL:

7 Ladies and Gentlemen, let's get our meeting started.  
8 This hearing will come to order. Good evening and welcome.  
9 My name is John Chappell and I am an Employee Development  
10 Specialist with the Bureau of Land Management in the Reno  
11 State Office.

12 I will be the presiding officer at this meeting  
13 tonight. This hearing is being held to receive information,  
14 views, comments and suggestions on the adequacy of the Nevada  
15 Contiguous Land Draft Wilderness Environmental Impact  
16 Statement prepared by the Bureau of Land Management.

17 This hearing gives us the opportunity to receive  
18 comments from the public and private sectors of the community.  
19 In addition, we welcome written comments received during the  
20 review and comment period which will close on September 17,  
21 1988.

22 Two hearings have been scheduled for this Draft  
23 Statement, the hearing held here tonight in Las Vegas and one  
24 scheduled tomorrow night in Reno.

25 The BLM has appointed a hearing panel to receive

3

American Federal Stenographers  
301 E. Clark Avenue, Suite 910  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89101  
702-382-1878

1 your comments. Seated with me today are Janaye Byergo.  
2 Janaye is the team leader for the Nevada Contiguous Land Draft  
3 Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement.

4 Linda Hansen is the Wilderness Specialist from the  
5 Nevada State Office in Reno. Sharon Nethererton, a Wilderness  
6 Specialist in our Ely office and she's at the table and Brian  
7 Amme, an Archaeologist with our Ely District Office.

8 The official recorder will make a verbatim  
9 transcript of this hearing and it is also being recorded on  
10 the tape to insure a complete and accurate record.

11 We request that only one person speak at a time  
12 while the hearing is in session. No one will be recognized  
13 other than the designated stated speaker and members of the  
14 hearing panel.

15 I want to emphasize that we are holding this meeting  
16 to obtain your views. To do this, there are certain  
17 guidelines which must be observed during the hearing to best  
18 use the time allowed.

19 These guidelines are listed for you on the handout  
20 and I will go over them with you now.

21 Number A, Please confine your statements to your  
22 views on the proposed action and draft environmental  
23 statement. Any other remarks are inappropriate to this  
24 hearing.

25 B, This hearing is strictly designated for you to

4

American Federal Stenographers  
301 E. Clark Avenue, Suite 910  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89101  
702-382-1878

1 give information to us, us, the BLM, therefore, there will be  
2 no debate or cross questioning between participants.

3 C. As a Federal representative, we must, following  
4 completion of the National Environmental Policy Act, process  
5 and decide on the merits of their proposed action.

6 Part of that process is seeking your views which  
7 will assist us in our deliberation which will be considered  
8 prior to making decisions concerning the proposed action.

9 I again stress that we are here to listen to your  
10 views. The hearing panel may ask clarifying questions as  
11 necessary at the conclusion of each speaker's remarks.

12 These questions, however should not be interpreted  
13 as expressions of any determined positions of the panel  
14 member, the BLM or the Department of Interior.

15 D. All speakers will confine their remarks to 3  
16 minutes or less. The person sitting with the Court Reporter  
17 will act as a time keeping person and that's Linda.

18 I will inform you when you have one minute. I'll  
19 hold up one finger and we are not going to stop or start the  
20 clock until you have given your name, your location and who  
21 you represent.

22 So, you are going to have a full 3 minutes to give  
23 your speech on the preliminaries that we require which will be  
24 prior to the clock starting.

25 For those who have both oral and written statements,

1 I suggest that your oral statements highlight the points which  
2 you wish to make, staying within the specified 3 minute time  
3 frame.

4 If you chose to submit only a written statement, we  
5 assure you that it will be given the same consideration as an  
6 oral statement made tonight. Copies of the written statements  
7 should include your name, address and the organization, if  
8 any, that you represent.

9 When you are called on to speak, copies of your  
10 statement should be given to the hearings coordinator sitting  
11 by the Reporter. I will take them and get them to the

12 I will take them and get them to the Recorder.  
13 Written statements may also be submitted to two of the BLM  
14 offices and the first one is the Bureau of Land Management,  
15 the Nevada State Office at P.O. Box 12088, that's in Reno,  
16 89520.

17 The other is the Las Vegas District Office, Bureau  
18 of Land Management, Las Vegas District Office, P.O. Box 26569,  
19 Las Vegas, Nevada 89126 and mark the statement to the  
20 attention of Wilderness DEIS. Team Leader.

21 Statements will be accepted until September 17,  
22 1988. Those who indicate to us prior to the hearing a desire  
23 to present a statement today, will speak first, following the  
24 scheduled speakers and we will hear from any of the rest of  
25 you as time permits.

1 Speakers not present when called on, will be placed  
2 at the end of the list.

3 Finally, a transcript of these proceedings will be  
4 available for review at BLM's Reno and Las Vegas Offices.  
5 Copies can be purchased from American Federal Stenographers  
6 and we have a card here that you can get if you want to get an  
7 address and we will give you a card of the stenographer. It's  
8 a company here in Las Vegas.

9 If there are any questions on the hearing procedure,  
10 we will try to answer them now. Are there any questions?

11 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

12 MR. CHAPPELL: Yes Ma'am.

13 FEMALE VOICE: Must we have a written copy of our  
14 speech to submit before we speak tonight?

15 MR. CHAPPELL: No, not at all. The oral statement  
16 will be taken by the stenographer and if you have a written  
17 statement, you can turn it in or mail it prior to September  
18 17th.

19 FEMALE VOICE: Thank you.

20 MR. CHAPPELL: But no, you do not need it written.

21 If there are no other questions. If there are  
22 no more questions then, Miss Byergo will briefly describe the  
23 proposed action and we will then proceed with the public  
24 comment, Janaye.  
25

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(Whereupon Ms. Byergo takes the  
podium)

MS. BYERGO: Again, I'm Janaye Byergo and I'm the  
team leader for the Nevada Contiguous Lands Wilderness  
Environmental Impact Statement.

Before starting tonight's hearing, I would like  
to present a brief overview of the proposed action and  
alternatives analyzed in this environmental impact statement.

Thirteen wilderness study areas and one  
instant study area were addressed in the Nevada Contiguous  
Lands Draft Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement. These  
study areas encompass some 288,918 acres located within Clark,  
Lincoln, White Pine and Humboldt Counties.

An all wilderness and no action/no wilderness  
alternatives were analyzed for each of the wilderness study  
areas and the instant study area.

The all wilderness alternative represents close  
to the maximum possible acreage that could be recommended  
suitable for wilderness designation within a study area.

No portion of a study area is recommended  
suitable under the no action/no wilderness alternative.

Five of the fourteen study areas were analyzed  
for a partial wilderness alternative. This alternative  
recommends as suitable for wilderness designation less than

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1 the total acreage of the study area in order to allow for  
2 resource conflicts and manageability considerations.

3 The proposed action for the Marble Canyon and  
4 Lime Canyon Wilderness Study areas recommended portions of  
5 each as suitable for wilderness designation, for a total of  
6 22,195 acres.

7 The proposed action for the remaining eleven  
8 wilderness study areas and the instant study area recommended  
9 the no action/no wilderness alternative.

10 Several issues and concerns were identified by  
11 the public and BLM staff during the scoping process.

12 The exploration and development of non-energy  
13 mineral resources and energy resources, wilderness values,  
14 livestock developments and maintenance activities, levels of  
15 motorized recreational use, development of utilities and  
16 material sites, crucial desert tortoise habitat and Lahontan  
17 Cut-throat Trout habitat, were the major issues addressed and  
18 carried through the impact analysis portion of the draft EIS.

19 As Mr. Chappell said, we will be receiving  
20 comments on the draft EIS until September 17th. I will now  
21 turn the hearing back to Mr. Chappell.

22 MR. CHAPPELL: As speakers are called, please give a  
23 copy of your statement, if you have a written statement to me  
24 at the table and I will get it to the Recorder.

25 Please begin your oral statement by stating

1 your name, your address and the organization you represent, if  
2 any.

3 We have quite a few speakers tonight and what  
4 we have done is; numbered them as they were turned in and  
5 there is one, we have cycled around because of distance of  
6 travel and I have indicated an early departure desire.

7 Our first speaker is Mr. Walter Lombardo, a  
8 consultant from here in Las Vegas and represents the Nevada  
9 Department of Minerals. Mr. Lombardo.

10 MR. LOMBARDO: The first thing I should ask is  
11 should I give my home address or my office address for the  
12 state?

13 MR. CHAPPELL: Whichever one you are comfortable  
14 with, sir. The office address is fine.

15  
16 (Whereupon Speaker Number 1 takes  
17 the podium)  
18

19 MR. LOMBARDO: My name is Walter Lombardo. I am a  
20 consultant for the Nevada Department of Minerals in Las Vegas.  
21 The Las Vegas office address is 2388 McLeod Street in Las  
22 Vegas and if you need, 89158.

23 The Nevada Department of Minerals appreciates  
24 the opportunity to comment on the Nevada Contiguous Lands  
25 Wilderness Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

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1 The Department of Minerals supports the BLM in  
2 its decision to withdraw the following wilderness study areas  
3 from further wilderness consideration:

4 Fish and Wildlife Numbers 1, 2 and 3

5 Million Hills

6 Garrett Buttes

7 Quail Springs

8 El Dorado

9 Ireteba Peaks

10 Jumbo Springs

11 Nellis ABC

12 and Evergreen ABC.

13 All of the above mentioned WSA's have  
14 sufficient mineral resource potential to warrant being left  
15 open for possible exploration and development the El Dorado  
16 and Ireteba Peaks WSA's are adjacent to the El Dorado  
17 (Nelson) and Searchlight Mining Districts, where significant  
18 gold and silver mining has occurred. Jumbo Springs also has  
19 potential for precious metals.

20 Portions of Clark County, as well as other  
21 areas in Nevada, have been targeted for energy resource  
22 exploration due to favorable geologic features.

23 Fish and Wildlife No. 1 and Evergreen ABC have  
24 oil and gas potential, while Quail Springs and Nellis ABC have  
25 geothermal energy potential.

11

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1 Fish and Wildlife Numbers 1, 2 and 3, Quail  
2 Springs, and Nellis ABC all have sand and gravel potential.  
3 Sand and gravel operations in Las Vegas are shut down to  
4 depletion or encroachment by urban areas, some of these  
5 outlying deposits may be utilized.

6 As the minerals industry is the second largest  
7 industry in the state, and as Nevada is a leading mining  
8 state, resource potential must be addressed when considering  
9 the management of public lands.

10 It is the responsibility of the Nevada  
11 Department of Minerals to advocate the responsible development  
12 of the state's mineral and energy resources.

13 The Department recommends the multiple-use  
14 concept for public lands where significant resource potential  
15 exists.

16 Therefore, the Nevada Department of Minerals  
17 supports the B.L.M. in its decisions on the Nevada Contiguous  
18 Lands wilderness study areas. Thank you.

19 HR. CHAPPELL: Thank you, sir. Our second speaker  
20 will be Connie Sinkins.

21  
22 (Whereupon Speaker Number 2 takes  
23 the floor)

24 MS. SINKINS: Good evening. My name is Connie  
25

12

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1 Sinkins and my mailing address is P.O. Box 333, Panaca,  
2 Nevada, 89042.

3 I speak this evening on behalf of the Lincoln  
4 County Commissioners who have asked me to tell you that they  
5 strongly support the BLM proposed action in this area.

6 We feel like the areas in our particular  
7 county that were wilderness study areas have a complete lack  
8 of wilderness values, isolation and roadless areas of 5,000  
9 acres and the outstanding qualities for solitude.

10 Those items are just not available in the  
11 areas that are being considered in our county.

12 I am, by choice, a 44 year resident of Lincoln  
13 County, Nevada. My home county contains 6.4 million acres of  
14 which 2 million are suggested as wilderness areas by our  
15 combined federal agency plans of Forest Service, the BLM, the  
16 US Fishing and Wildlife Service and the National Park Service.

17 Ladies and Gentlemen, I submit to you that 32  
18 percent of any county anywhere is too much to be managed as  
19 wilderness and with 86 percent of Nevada managed by the Feds  
20 and a whopping 98.16 percent of my county in Federal and we  
21 strongly resist wilderness management and I believe  
22 wilderness management has proved counter-productive to the  
23 healthy multiple use concept.

24 We strongly believe that every person from  
25 every walk of life has a right and privilege to use these

13

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1 lands. This is multiple use concept in practice and we know  
2 it works.

3 It makes sense and it works because everyone  
4 has a voice in how the land is managed. In the July 27th

5 In the July 27th issue of the Review Journal a  
6 very interesting article to me that supports what we believe  
7 and our feelings in this matter and it's entitled, "Camping  
8 Hurts Wilderness Areas," and the US Forest Official said  
9 today that they can't keep away from the degeneration being  
10 done to once pretine wilderness areas and Americans are  
11 looking for a wilderness experience, but instead are finding  
12 dangerous trails, dirty and overcrowded campsites and  
13 unsanitary water and much man-made pollution.

14 The Director of the US Fire and Wildlife  
15 Service said and also rangers from six western areas said  
16 that more attention and money are needed for the service of  
17 the 32 million acres of wilderness.

18 We believe that Nevada is special and we favor  
19 protecting the areas that are appropriate to be protected as  
20 wilderness considerations, but we urge that you use a common  
21 sense approach and we believe that the BLM is recommending in  
22 this case to do what is really best for this resource, our  
23 public lands. Thank you very much.

24 MR. CHAPPELL: Thank you Mrs. Sinkins. Our third  
25 speaker tonight will be Curtiss Robinson. Curtiss?

14

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1 (Whereupon Speaker Number 3 takes  
2 the podium)

3  
4 MR. ROBINSON: Good evening. My name is Curtiss  
5 Robinson. My address is 4535 West Sahara, Number 185, Las  
6 Vegas, Nevada 89182.

7 I'd like to make a brief statement that I  
8 except the BLM proposal of the elimination of 12 out of 14  
9 areas and that will be about it. Thank you very much.

10 MR. CHAPPELL: Thank you sir.

11 Our fourth speaker tonight will be Harry  
12 Pappas. I hope I pronounced that correctly.

13  
14 (Whereupon Speaker Number 4 takes  
15 the podium)

16  
17 MR. PAPPAS: Pappas. My name is Harry Pappas and  
18 I'm the Executive Director for Nevada's Practical Wilderness  
19 Policy. That organization represents 36 different groups and  
20 organizations in Nevada.

21 I'm also Chairman of the Nevada State Rifle  
22 and Pistol Association, Hunting and Wilderness Committee.

23 The Nevada State Rifle and Pistol Association  
24 represent approximately 18 to 28, sportsmen and hunting  
25 organizations in Nevada and both of these organizations are

15

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1 opposed to Federal wilderness in Nevada. However, we are not  
2 However, we are not opposed to wilderness and  
3 both organizations are strongly opposed to the Federal  
4 designation of wilderness.

5 This might seem a little odd to people that do  
6 not know the issue that well, but we support wilderness,  
7 natural wilderness and the wilderness that we have in Nevada.

8 We don't support it when the Federal  
9 designation wilderness designations are put on those lands.  
10 They play into too many restrictions.

11 I'm going to give one example. We have placed  
12 Elk on Spring Mountain Range up here at Spring Mountain and  
13 the table mountain areas and those Elk are not indigenous to  
14 those areas.

15 If we had wilderness designations on Spring  
16 Mountain and table, those Elk could not have been allowed to  
17 introduce because they therefore come under an exotic  
18 species.

19 Also, you talk about Guzzlers in Nevada and one  
20 top name bird are Chuckers. By designating the area of  
21 wilderness, it will have a severe impact on the guzzlers that  
22 we use for Chuckers and the guzzlers used for Bighorn.

23 They have to be maintained and also man-made  
24 structures that violate several provisions of the 1964  
25 Wilderness Act.

16

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1 To summarize, I would say this organization  
2 supports wilderness. We are against Federal wilderness and  
3 all wilderness and all Federal wilderness in the State of  
4 Nevada. Thank you.

5 MR. CHAPPELL: Thank you Mr. Pappas.

6 Our next speaker tonight will be Robert  
7 Maichle.

8  
9 (Whereupon Speaker Number 5 takes  
10 the floor)

11  
12 MR. MAICHLE: My name is Robert Maichle and people  
13 call me Bob. Janaye probably recognizes me from extensive  
14 work in the scoping process.

15 I would like to address some real quick  
16 comments speaking for 4 organizations of which I am either a  
17 principal, a director and in one case was just asked by the  
18 Southern Director to speak to the organization and that's the  
19 Nevada Off-Highway Users Council.

20 That's the best in the desert racing  
21 association of which I am a Director and also the Motorcycle  
22 Racing Association of Nevada.

23 I am the Conservation Director and I'm Vice  
24 President of that organization and the Gamblers Motorcycle  
25 Club, which I am the President of.

17

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1 My address is 4221 West Arbu, Las Vegas,  
2 Nevada 89118-5187.

3 We were pleased to read the report. We were  
4 especially happy to see that many of our ideas were  
5 incorporated.

6 We endorse part or the majority of those  
7 actions and the specifics where we have some other  
8 suggestions, we will address in my written comment which is  
9 more appropriate.

10 From NOHUC, the one organization that I am not  
11 a director of even though I was asked to simply state that  
12 NOHUC, we support the action to remove the 12 areas.

13 From the other three organizations, I'd like  
14 to particularly commend the removal of the western half of  
15 the El Dorado's with your designation to not include the El  
16 Dorado's in further study and your proposal to that and to  
17 note that in addition to the minerals that this gentleman has  
18 mentioned, the recreation that would be curtailed, the on-  
19 going recreation as of '89, would be curtailed if that  
20 portion, that western portion was continued insignificant and  
21 I hope that will be taken into consideration.

22 Mr. Pappas spoke of two types of wilderness  
23 and I should like to say that many of these areas are  
24 wilderness in one respect.

25 The wilderness that I and most of us like and I

18

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1 think that has become wilderness with a small w and to quote  
 2 Mr. Marnold, an ecologist, said what the difference is in  
 3 wilderness with a big W and wilderness with a small w; we want  
 4 the best management for our land and these small scraps, that  
 5 we can thank them for returning to us in the most part, do not  
 6 have opportunities for solitude and the other things.

7 The Basic Act of 1964 said that we should be  
 8 looking for the fact that they are not there and this is  
 9 reflected in our proposed action and I applaud again,  
 10 particularly Janaye because she's the one that I have worked  
 11 with the most and as I say, the organization, to submit  
 12 individual comments. Thank you very much.

13 MR. CHAPPELL: Thank you Mr. Maichle.

14 Our sixth speaker will be Richard Wyman and  
 15 it's a flexible mike and you can move it to fit you if you  
 16 like. Be comfortable with the mike.

17  
 18 (Whereupon Speaker Number 6 takes  
 19 the podium)

20  
 21 MR. WYMAN: Thank you. I'm Richard Wyman,  
 22 W-Y-M-A-N, and my address is 610 Bryant Court, Boulder City,  
 23 Nevada 89005.

24 I am here actually representing the Southern  
 25 Nevada section of the American Institute of Mining,

1 Metallurgical and Petroleum Engineers, GEM Committee and  
 2 that's the Department of Energy and Minerals Committee and  
 3 the AIM is a professional organization of mining engineers,  
 4 geologists and petroleum engineers.

5 Primarily we endorse the Bureau of Land  
 6 Management's position on this. It is very important that we  
 7 keep the public lands open for mineral explorations and  
 8 deposits of petroleum and other types of minerals of fuel,  
 9 minerals and others that are only found in places where nature  
 10 put them.

11 As far as if we keep locking these areas up, we  
 12 are reducing our potential for our future and these are  
 13 really locked up.

14 The wilderness that we refer to as government  
 15 wilderness is wilderness with a padlock and cable across the  
 16 gate, something that I don't believe many people understand  
 17 today.

18 I want to speak particularly in favor of the  
 19 Bureau of Land Management's decision on these areas, Lime  
 20 Canyon and these are the ones that I'm particularly familiar  
 21 with the mineral potential myself personally and the Lime and  
 22 Million Hills, these are out in the Gold Butte country and the  
 23 Garrett Buttes and the little one that joined there, Quail  
 24 Springs and then down the El Oorado and the Iretoba Peaks and  
 25 these areas have high mineral potential and relatively

1 undisturbed areas because of lack of transportation and lack  
2 of access.

3 It's not because of lack of mineral potential  
4 and I'm very happy to see them return to the public domain.  
5 Thank you.

6 MR. CHAPPELL: Thank you Mr. Wyman.

7 Our seventh speaker will be Charles Luzier.

8  
9 (Whereupon Speaker Number 7 takes  
10 the podium)

11  
12 MR. LUZIER: Yes. I'm Charles Luzier and I live at  
13 5567 Curruth Street, Las Vegas, Nevada 89128.

14 I'm speaking as a life long citizen of the  
15 State of Nevada and what I have to say on this wilderness  
16 matter is the fact that; I have probably through the years of  
17 my life, traveled most of these roads that go through these  
18 wilderness areas and what wilderness designation does is; it's  
19 going to prohibit me from further enjoyment of these areas and  
20 I don't particularly like that.

21 Thank you.

22 MR. CHAPPELL: Thank you, sir.

23 None of you are using your 3 minutes.

24 MALE VOICE: That's good.

25 MR. CHAPPELL: Speaker number 8 will be Jerry

21

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1 Barker.

2  
3 (Whereupon Speaker Number 8 takes  
4 the floor)

5  
6 MR. BARKER: My name is Jerry Barker and I live at  
7 612 Huntington, Las Vegas, Nevada 89187 and I'm for the  
8 multiple use of the lands.

9 I'm against wilderness areas just like the man  
10 before me and I have hunted and fished all over Nevada and I  
11 have been on roads in areas where they want to designate as  
12 wilderness areas and I would resent it highly if I was kept  
13 out.

14 I also belong to a few rock clubs in town, the  
15 Las Vegas GOM Club and the Clark County GOM Club and also the  
16 Gold Searchers and I would resent any infringement on me to  
17 participate in my hobby and I know my friends feel the same  
18 way.

19 MR. CHAPPELL: Thank you Mr. Barker.

20 Our ninth speaker tonight will be James Horn,  
21 H-O-R-N.

22  
23 (Whereupon Speaker Number 9 takes  
24 the podium)

25  
22

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1 MR. HORN: My name is James D. Horn, 1688 North  
2 Ridgeway Drive, Glendale, California.

3 My objection to this thing is; I have got six  
4 sections of land in the Gold Butte area and I have a lease on  
5 it for 5 or 6 years yet and I do not feel - we have expended  
6 quite a bit of money to improve the lease and have surveys run  
7 and everything else and we are right on the verge of starting  
8 to drill right now and I would like to be able to go ahead and  
9 do it until my time is up, if I possibly could.

10 MR. CHAPPELL: Thank you, Mr. Horn.

11 The tenth speaker will be Bryant Robinson.

12  
13 (Whereupon Speaker Number 10 takes  
14 the podium)

15  
16 MR. ROBINSON: I'm Bryant Robinson and my address is  
17 Post Office Box 78, Logandale, Nevada.

18 I'm a native of southern Nevada. I am  
19 presently President of the Energy Research Corporation. I'm  
20 also a member of the Nevada State Conservation Commission.

21 I do not believe that wilderness studies in  
22 wilderness areas will in any way serve the best interest of  
23 the citizens of Nevada.

24 I think that the existing multiple use plan of  
25 the BLM does serve those interests.

23

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1 I think that mining is important to Nevada and  
2 energy resources are important to the State of Nevada and I  
3 think that wilderness areas will preclude development of any  
4 of those resources.

5 I also agree with the fishermen and wildlife  
6 uses for the State of Nevada that would be precluded with a  
7 wilderness area.

8 We are particularly interested in the Gold  
9 Butte area right now.

10 We do not believe that any of that area is  
11 adaptable in any way to a wilderness area. It has been mined  
12 for years and years and mining claims are out there and  
13 there's nothing very substantial ever going on there, but  
14 there is, it is covered with mineral resources and certainly  
15 not an area that should be even considered for a wilderness  
16 area.

17 I appreciate the recommendations of the BLM  
18 presently and I think they should be conformed to.

19 Thank you very much.

20 MR. CHAPPELL: Thank you Mr. Robinson.

21 Our eleventh speaker will be Phillip Henderson.

22  
23 (Whereupon Speaker Number 11 takes  
24 the podium)

25

24

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1 MR. HENDERSON: My name is Phillip Henderson. I  
2 reside at 3841 Syracuse, S-T-R-A-C-U-S-E Drive, Las Vegas,  
3 Nevada 89121.

4 I'm the President of the Las Vegas Building  
5 Materials, the oldest ready-mix concrete supplier in the  
6 southern Nevada area. This company was founded by my father  
7 in 1946.

8 I applaud the BLM on its multiple land use  
9 program, because the Clark County Management Frame Work Plan  
10 that was passed in 1984 mandates that BLM will not grant or  
11 renew any aggregate leases for any ready-mix concrete company  
12 or aggregate producer in the Las Vegas Valley area.

13 There are 6 ready-mix concrete companies in  
14 the Las Vegas area right now. Of those six, two companies  
15 are Las Vegas Building Materials and Bonanza Materials which  
16 are currently supplying all or part of the aggregate supplies  
17 to five of those companies including ourselves.

18 As you can see that as encroachment occurs, as  
19 the depletion occurs and the existing sand and gravel pits in  
20 Clark County area used up, because of the Clark County  
21 Management Frame Work Plan which mandates the BLM will not  
22 allow us to renew any new leases, we must leave the valley.

23 Every person here tonight arrived on an  
24 asphalt road and we are sitting in a building on a concrete  
25 pad footing, concrete blocks which form the walls and this

1 building would not be possible without aggregates.

2 I applaud BLM's plan because it helps prevent  
3 us from putting ourselves in Denver's position where  
4 aggregates are being trucked in from 60 and 70 miles away.

5 We are currently looking for aggregate  
6 resources. We have 5 or 6 different resources; El Dorado  
7 Valley, Kyle Canyon, Sloan and a number of areas that are  
8 being released back into the public domain, which will allow  
9 us to pursue these and providing aggregates for materials and  
10 continued construction in one of the 10 fastest growing  
11 cities of the United States, which will allow us to grow.

12 It will allow us to be price competitive and  
13 keep construction costs down.

14 I applaud the BLM again and thank you for the  
15 opportunity of speaking.

16 MR. CHAPPELL: Thank you Mr. Henderson.

17 Number 12 will be Max Christiansen.

18  
19 (Whereupon Speaker Number 12 takes  
20 the podium)

21  
22 MR. CHRISTIANSEN: My name is Max Christiansen and  
23 I live at 5332 West Oakley and I represent the Nevada  
24 Sportsmen and Outdoorsmen Association. We support the BLM's  
25 position in turning this land back to public use. Thank you.

1 MR. CHAPPELL: Thank you, sir.

2  
3 (Whereupon there was a brief  
4 interruption in the proceedings  
5 to change tapes)

6  
7 MR. CHAPPELL: Let's try again.

8 Number 13 will be Harlan Miller.

9  
10 (Whereupon Speaker Number 13 takes  
11 the podium)

12  
13 MR. MILLER: My name is Harlan Miller and I live at  
14 1126 Fuente Way, Boulder City, Nevada 89005.

15 I'm here tonight to speak for myself and my  
16 feelings towards this proposal.

17 I'm in complete agreement for dropping any of  
18 these areas from the wilderness proposal or considerations  
19 that they had made.

20 The great State of Nevada was brought into  
21 this nation with the silver that provided a grave step  
22 towards our great nation. Further exploration into these  
23 areas would be curtailed, if these areas are locked up.

24 Future development, as far as mineral  
25 exploration in all of these areas, should go forth. My

1 My private interest in this is; I am a mineral  
2 collector and I would like to have access to all of these  
3 areas.

4 I have lived in the State of Nevada for 9  
5 years and I plan on continuing my career here and upon  
6 retirement, remain in the state and will support the taxes  
7 that everyone else supports.

8 Therefore, upon retirement, I would like to  
9 have the ability to go to these various areas and travel  
10 these roads throughout the areas that are proposed.

11 So, the bottom line is that; I would like to  
12 see the proposal adopted and these areas dropped from the  
13 wilderness program. Thank you.

14 MR. CHAPPELL: Thank you Mr. Miller.

15 Number 14 will be Samee Cordova.

16  
17 (Whereupon Speaker Number 14 takes  
18 the podium)

19  
20 MRS. CORDOVA: My name is Samee Cordova and my  
21 business or mailing address is Post Office Box 7432, Las  
22 Vegas, Nevada 89125.

23 I'm on the Board of Directors of the Clark  
24 County Gem Collectors. I'm President of the Fossil Finders  
25 of Southern Nevada.

1 I'm against any wilderness areas being further  
2 developed in the State of Nevada and I believe I speak for  
3 both clubs and all members concerned.

4 Being a gem and mineral collector and involved  
5 in ecology and paleontology, I have made some very important  
6 discoveries towards this end in this state.

7 One, I'd like to be able to continue to go  
8 into any area that I so chose and continue my research and  
9 projects for the benefit and education of everyone in the  
10 State of Nevada.

11 Thank you.

12 MR. CHAPPELL: Thanks Mrs. Cordova.

13 Excuse me if I butcher this one, but Jim  
14 Kasarjian is Number 15.

15  
16 (Whereupon Speaker Number 15 takes  
17 the podium)

18  
19 MR. KASARJIAN: My name is James Kasarjian and my  
20 business address is 3311 South Jones, Suite 211, Las Vegas,  
21 Nevada 89102.

22 I represent Vanderbilt Gold Corporation. We  
23 are an active mining company in the state with corporate  
24 headquarters in Las Vegas and currently have under our  
25 exploration budget, over \$300,000 for exploration in areas

29

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1 close to some of the areas that we are talking about.

2 We are a responsible mining company and have  
3 to address the environment and conduction of business  
4 throughout the state in some areas that may be under  
5 consideration for wilderness areas.

6 One of our projects which we are currently  
7 doing exploration in is virgin territory. Nobody thought  
8 there was anything there. Even the old timers and even much  
9 of our financing of substantial mineral potential.

10 My basic point is; many of the roads we travel  
11 and many of the places we enjoy and are able to visit were by  
12 in large created by mining companies, whether it was by burro  
13 or wagon-train or trackless railroad or the railroad itself  
14 and I think it's a great detriment to block off areas and do  
15 economic harm to the State of Nevada.

16 We contribute substantially hundreds of  
17 thousands of dollars every year to GMP, to the State of  
18 Nevada and I think it should be recognized just what the  
19 dollar contribution that we do contribute, especially to  
20 counties such as Lincoln County, which we have claims in.

21 They would hopefully enjoy some of the  
22 benefits of our activities and we feel it a shame to be  
23 locked up.

24 I do support the BLM. Thank you.

25 MR. CHAPPELL: Thank you Mr. Kasarjian.

30

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1 MR. KASARJIAN: Good.

2 MR. CHAPPELL: Our 16th speaker will be Dorsey  
3 Stewart.

4  
5 (Whereupon Speaker Number 16 takes  
6 the podium)

7  
8 MS. STEWART: My name is Dorsey Stewart and I am  
9 living at 5325 East Cheyenne Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada 89115-  
10 3501.

11 I belong to the Clark County Gem Collectors,  
12 the Las Vegas Gem Club, the Gold Searchers of Southern Nevada  
13 and the Nevada Sportsmen and Outdoorsmen Association.

14 I would like to also speak for the Boulder  
15 City Rock Club and I was talking to one of their members just  
16 before we got here and she said, "Please tell them we are  
17 with you."

18 We definitely support the feeling of the BLM  
19 that these areas should be returned to multiple use in  
20 pursuit of our hobbies, multiple hobbies and we need these  
21 lands to go out and look for rocks.

22 The only thing we are going to be hunting  
23 with, if these are closed, is what they call the dream pick  
24 or the dollar bill we'll have to go to South America for our  
25 things.

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1 We really don't want our mineral resources  
2 locked up. Fair trade with the rest of the world is okay,  
3 but let's not get ridiculous by buying all of theirs and  
4 destroying ours with wilderness padlocks.

5 Jerry Baker told you about his hobby which he  
6 wants to pursue it and he makes beautiful jewelry, he also  
7 does gorgeous scrimshaw carvings and Samee Cordova also  
8 belongs to our club and has discovered some very valuable  
9 fossil deposits which would not have been known if it weren't  
10 for her expertise and her, I call it "fossil-nose."

11 Nothing derogatory meant on that, but and the  
12 concrete industry, please I'm getting tired of walking on  
13 rocks.

14 I need my driveway concreted. Let's leave all  
15 of these things open for multiple use, please.

16 Thank you.

17 MR. CHAPPELL: Thank you Mrs. Stewart.

18 Number 17 is Perry Dickerson.

19  
20 (Whereupon Speaker Number 17 takes  
21 the podium)

22  
23 MR. DICKERSON: My name is Perry Dickerson and I  
24 reside at 615 Diamond Circle, Las Vegas, Nevada 89186.

25 I'm a live member of the National Rifle

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1 Association, the Nevada State Rifle and Pistol Association,  
2 the California State Rifle and Pistol Association, Desert  
3 Sportsmen Rifle and Pistol Association and past President of  
4 all of them except the California and National.

5 I am currently President of Bighorn Rifle and  
6 Pistol Association. We are very much interested in seeing  
7 that the federal government ceases and desists on the so-  
8 called wilderness reform that we have.

9 Due to the lack of management, we are rapidly  
10 approaching and a good many areas of our nation, has the  
11 situation that occurred in the early 1920's where virtually  
12 the distinction of deer, Elk, antelope and most of our  
13 wildlife, with the exception of turkeys, which we have plenty  
14 of in some areas in 1920.

15 For instance, Missouri, we had no deer,  
16 countable and in Pennsylvania, we had somewhere in the  
17 neighborhood of 12,000 and Arizona was down to around 40,000  
18 over the state due to the hunters and the American Rifleman  
19 and I believe somewhere in the neighborhood of \$90 billion  
20 dollars which they have spent since the Pitman Robinson Act  
21 in Wildlife Management.

22 We have brought our deer herds and animal  
23 wildlife back to where you know, we can have a decent harvest  
24 and keep these animals growing.

25 The so-called roadless areas that we have in

1 one of the handouts out front, it showed some pictures of  
2 them.

3 There's one gentleman that spoke here and I  
4 have drive most of these roads in Nevada, southern Las Vegas,  
5 Nevada and I have hauled in excess of 250 juniors, both boys  
6 and girls throughout southern Nevada on various outings,  
7 teaching them to shoot.

8 We have traveled these so-called roadless  
9 areas and have never even so much as bent a cactus.

10 Most of our off-road team treats our country  
11 that way and they respect it and such as the Gem Club people.

12 Well, I was in Washington in August last year  
13 and testified at a hearing at that time. Well, maybe I  
14 hadn't better go into that. Anyway, I believe that the BLM

15 Anyway, I believe that the BLM is doing the  
16 right thing in dropping these things and we are behind you.

17 Thank you.

18 MR. CHAPPELL: Thank you Mr. Dickerson.

19 Number 18 is Ray Buckland.

20

21 (Whereupon Speaker Number 18 takes  
22 the podium)

23

24 MR. BUCKLAND: My name is Ray Buckland and my  
25 address is Post Office Box 8128 Nevada.

1 I'm Vice President of the Energy Research,  
2 Incorporated and presently involved in oil well drillings  
3 projects in Gold Butte and to this date, the Gold Butte area,  
4 I venture to say, has probably been close to a million  
5 dollars spent in the exploration and development of the  
6 petroleum production in the State of Nevada, and by the BLM  
7 coming in with this WSA study areas, that will restrict a lot  
8 of this and restrict revenue for the State of Nevada.

9 The 12 percent of the money that's or the  
10 percentage of the oil that is taken out of the State of  
11 Nevada, the BLM gets 12 1/2 percent of the 6 1/2 percent of  
12 that returned to the State of Nevada and that revenue goes  
13 towards the school district in the State of Nevada and a good  
14 portion of the population.

15 So, by putting in these wilderness areas  
16 throughout the state, you restrict not only mineral  
17 exploration, drilling, mining and other exploration, but you  
18 also restrict funds derived from those products that will go  
19 to the education to future generations in our state and I'm  
20 from California and I haven't been here that long.

21 But the thing is; that the benefit from leaving  
22 these lands for multiple use, so everybody can benefit from  
23 them, the sportsmen, the rockhounds and the geologists and the  
24 petroleum mining or whatever, I feel that is, this would  
25 really be very much in a detriment to the state if they

35

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1 restrict this by developing WSA study areas.

2 Thank you.

3 MR. CHAPPELL: Thank you Mr. Buckland.

4 Our 19th speaker will be Geoff Arnold.

5  
6 (Whereupon Speaker Number 19 takes  
7 the podium)

8  
9 MR. ARNOLD: My name is Geoff Arnold and just some  
10 general comments.

11 My address is 2312 North Green Valley Parkway  
12 in Henderson.

13 I'm a CPA and I'm Controller for Viceroy Gold  
14 Corporation and Past President of the Elko Chamber of  
15 Commerce and founding member of Nevadans for Practical  
16 Wilderness Policy.

17 Some general comments; we support the efforts  
18 of the BLM in which drafting some of these proposed areas for  
19 wilderness.

20 It is unfair to leave lands tied up with WSA's.  
21 It has been a tactic of groups like the Sierra Club to try and  
22 tie up lands and eventually in both foreign development  
23 services, for those lands to be put into multiple use.

24 I'm recently new to gold mining and I have met  
25 geologists and I have come to admire geologists and I find

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1 that most geologists are environmentalists at heart.

2       One thing I have learned is that geologists,  
3 although they are professional, are not really very good at  
4 finding minerals. In the discovery of minerals, including  
5 gold, which is largely a function of luck of exploratory  
6 drilling.

7       In our mine, which we have determined we have  
8 preserves of gold of about 400 million dollars which would  
9 not have been discovered, would it not have been found just  
10 by looking at the surface.

11       It was luck and drilling and we support the  
12 multiple use concept which we think that wilderness is a  
13 concept, but by definition is of no use or no management at  
14 all and we believe that the BLM has the capacity to manage  
15 property.

16       We believe that the property will become more  
17 effectively utilized and more productive and better preserved  
18 for the future if it's well managed.

19       So, we support the BLM and your efforts there,  
20 especially in the political environment where it may be  
21 popular to withdraw land from use totally. We believe that

22       We believe that the United States needs to work  
23 on its balance of payments/deficits. There's a balance of  
24 payments, deficits in gold.

25       So, we need to take advantage of the mineral

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1 deposits that we have and you only have gold where you find  
2 it.

3       My observations from here tonight and other  
4 public scoping meetings and from all of the public hearings  
5 that we had in Elko several years ago and over the past few  
6 years, my observations are that the proposal for wilderness  
7 comes through outside the local area.

8       They come from people in the big cities that  
9 think it's a good idea to tell the local people how we should  
10 live our lives and whether we should not survive economically  
11 at all.

12       One other comment is that; although you have  
13 withdrawn a large degree of land from wilderness proposals,  
14 you have kept some and that's not bad, but I want to note that  
15 if you have small areas, even though they are small and they  
16 are spread about, there's the requirement having to do with  
17 Class I aerial zones over those wilderness areas that would  
18 limit exploration in those areas.

19       So affectively, the area that you're  
20 withdrawing from mineral exploration is larger. Thank you.

21       MR. CHAPPELL: Thank you Mr. Arnold.

22       Are there any others that would like to give a  
23 speech?

24       MR. SAYER: Yes sir. My name is Wayne Sayer,  
25 S-A-Y-E-R and I live at 4213 Canal Circle, Las Vegas, Nevada.

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1 My interest in speaking here tonight is for the  
2 future. I am President of Super Conductor Resources  
3 Corporation. We specialize in the land lancinite series of  
4 rare earth. It's an area that has not been explored in Nevada  
5 very much. It's material is being produced at Mountain Pass.

6 I'm a retired mineral and gas broker and I have  
7 lived in California. I think any effort to preserve the  
8 foreclosure to exploration of new minerals is probably a good  
9 step in the right direction and I want to endorse the BLM,  
10 their stand in this matter tonight. Thank you.

11 MR. CHAPPELL: Thank you Mr. Sayer.

12 Are there any others?

13 MR. POULSEN: Yes sir. I'm Eldon Poulsen, 4368  
14 Malaga Drive, 89121, Las Vegas.

15 What I would like to suggest is; we give a vote  
16 of thanks to all the various miners and mining companies  
17 having traveled from Western Utah, Eastern Nevada and most of  
18 the State of Nevada and the bulk of the off-roads that are  
19 available to us and as hunters and sportsmen, we find  
20 exploring paid people were put there by the miners.

21 These people going and spend a lot of money  
22 opening up these areas so we, the people, can use them.

23 If we make these wilderness areas, the only  
24 people that can use them, are the physically fit, 18 to 28  
25 year olds and when you get to be 35, you start down hill and

1 at 38, they grease the track.

2 So, if they don't have roads on these areas,  
3 nobody is going to be able to use them.

4 I would like to applaud the idea of getting out  
5 of the wilderness area and opening them up, so that everybody  
6 can use them. If we would have gone with this concept, 150  
7 years ago, we'd all be east of the Mississippi. Thank you.

8 MR. CHAPPELL: Thank you. Are there any others?

9 MR. ROBINSON: I'm Dell Robinson and I've lived  
10 in this state since 1989. I have traveled all over in  
11 different capacities and I have walked a goodly share of it.

12 I know a lot of mineral resources that some of  
13 you fellows would be very glad to know about and I'm against  
14 in any way, prohibiting people from going where they want to,  
15 but I'm also against them traveling and making roads and  
16 tearing the country up.

17 I can tell you or show you a road that was made  
18 to my knowledge, well over 78 years ago and it's still there  
19 and across the desert and it will be there for a hundred or so  
20 more years.

21 So, I would ask you that when you are out  
22 traveling with your dune buggies and whatever, don't make a  
23 lot of new roads. They stay there and they mar the desert.

24 They mar the beauty of our country and you may  
25 not realize it, but if you will travel over this country in an

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1 airplane and look for some roads, you will see some roads and  
2 you think you could get down them and really travel on, but if  
3 you got down there with a 4-wheel drive outfit, you'd have a  
4 tough time traveling them.

5 But, when you disturb the desert, it's  
6 disturbed for a long time. Be careful. I have been on this  
7 I have been on this desert as I say - - well,  
8 more years than most of you people could imagine, but this is  
9 a beautiful country and the desert is beautiful.

10 I have liked it and I have hunted it and I have  
11 hunted for uranium and maybe I could tell you a little bit  
12 about uranium. Maybe you will want to go and find it.

13 There's some big high sand stone mountains here  
14 in Clark County and in those sand stone, huge sand stone  
15 mountains, you will find a little strip, maybe 1/2 inch thick  
16 of high grade uranium. It will send your geiger counter  
17 crazy.

18 On that same strip, it has got about 500 feet  
19 somewhere near that and there's sand stone on top of it and  
20 it's all lying level and you can walk around, drive around for  
21 a quarter of a mile or maybe more than that.

22 Years ago, it wasn't hard for me to travel  
23 a quarter of a mile. It would be several miles now, but  
24 anyway, you can drive around this big sand stone lake and you  
25 will find this little strip of turnapar (pho) coming out

1 the other side of it.

2 And I can get there. How do you get there, is  
3 there any geologist that can tell me that?

4 It's only about an inch thick and it's buried  
5 up under hundreds of feet of sand stone, but it goes clear  
6 around the same level.

7 I'd like to ask you folks that have your dune  
8 buggies and your motorcycles and other stuff, to travel on  
9 places that have been traveled. Don't go to new places,  
10 because you build a road and it's there from now on.

11 Don't destroy the desert, please. I think I  
12 told you who I was, Dell Robinson and I came to this - -  
13 Clark County in 1989 and I wasn't born here but I came here in  
14 1989 and I seen some changes.

15 So, there will be some more changes and we  
16 better protect the country as we travel and go.

17 MR. CHAPPELL: Thank you, Mr. Robinson.

18 Are there any others who would like to speak?

19 MR. MAICHLE: I checked on the ground rules when I  
20 came in and it said one shot at the podium.

21 MR. PAPPAS: Do we have a chance to ask questions?

22 MS. UYERGO: It's strictly a hearing and we are not  
23 here to answer questions this evening, but just to take  
24 testimony.

25 You are welcome to come into the office any

1 time and I will be available for questions.

2 MR. CHAPPELL: Are there any others? Mr. Maichle?

3 MR. MAICHLE: Could I have my last minute. I only  
4 talked for 2.

5 MR. CHAPPELL: One shot at the mike. We appreciate  
6 your coming.

7 I frankly was intense myself as to what I'd  
8 find here tonight. Your frank, open, heart-felt comments I  
9 know are appreciated by Mrs. Byergo and Mrs. Hansen and we  
10 thank you for coming out and this meeting is adjourned.

11  
12 (Whereupon hearing proceedings  
13 were adjourned)

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1 STATE OF NEVADA )  
2 ) ss CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER  
3 COUNTY OF CLARK )

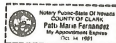
4 I, Patti Fernandez, CSR #129, duly commissioned Notary  
5 Public, Clark County, State of Nevada, do hereby certify:

6 That I reported the taking of the hearing of the BUREAU  
7 OF LAND MANAGEMENT, NEVADA CONTIGUOUS LANDS DRAFT E.I.S.,  
8 PUBLIC TESTIMONY, commencing on the 3rd of August, 1988, at  
9 the hour of 7:15 P.M. That I thereafter transcribed my said  
10 shorthand notes and that the typewritten transcript of said  
11 hearing is a complete, true and accurate transcript of my  
12 shorthand notes.

13 I further certify that I am not a relative or employee of  
14 the parties, attorneys or counsel involved in said action, nor  
15 a person financially interested in the action.

16 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and  
17 affixed my official seal in my office in the County of Clark,  
18 State of Nevada, this 12th day of August, 1988.

19  
20  
21 Patti Fernandez, C.S.R.  
22  
23



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HEARING OF THE NEVADA CONTIGUOUS  
LANDS DRAFT WILDERNESS  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

AUGUST 4, 1988  
RENO, NEVADA

REPORTED BY: MICHELE WHITE, CSR #282  
CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTER

2000年10月10日  
 2000年10月10日

JOHN CHAPPELL, PRESIDING OFFICER  
JANAYE BYERGD, TEAM LEADER  
LINDA HANSEN, WILDERNESS SPECIALIST  
SHAARON NETHERTON, WILDERNESS SPECIALIST  
LYNN CLEMONS, WILDERNESS SPECIALIST

I'M AN EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST WITH THE BUREAU OF LAND  
MANAGEMENT IN THE STATE OFFICE HERE IN RENO. I WILL BE THE  
PRESIDING OFFICER AT THIS HEARING.

THIS HEARING IS TO DETERMINE -- IS BEING HELD TO  
RECEIVE INFORMATION, VIEWS, COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS ON THE  
ADEQUACY OF THE NEVADA CONTIGUOUS LAND DRAFT WILDERNESS  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT PREPARED BY THE BUREAU OF LAND  
MANAGEMENT. THIS HEARING GIVES US THE OPPORTUNITY TO RECEIVE  
COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS OF THE COMMUNITY.  
IN ADDITION, WE WELCOME WRITTEN COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING THE  
REVIEW AND COMMENT PERIOD, WHICH WILL CLOSE ON SEPTEMBER 17TH.  
1988.

TWO HEARINGS ARE BEING SCHEDULED FOR THIS DRAFT STATEMENT. THE FIRST WAS HELD LAST NIGHT IN LAS VEGAS AND THE

1 SECOND HERE TONIGHT IN RENO.

2 THE B.L.M. HAS APPOINTED A PANEL TO RECEIVE YOUR  
3 COMMENTS. SEATED WITH ME HERE TONIGHT ARE THE FOLLOWING B.L.M.  
4 EMPLOYEES: JANAYE BYERGO. SHE'S THE TEAM LEADER FOR THE NEVADA  
5 CONTIGUOUS LANDS DRAFT WILDERNESS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT  
6 STATEMENT. SHE'S A WILDERNESS SPECIALIST IN THE LAS VEGAS  
7 DISTRICT OFFICE. LINDA HANSEN, A WILDERNESS SPECIALIST WITH THE  
8 BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT IN RENO IN THE STATE OFFICE. SHARON  
9 NETHERTON, A WILDERNESS SPECIALIST IN OUR ELY DISTRICT OFFICE.  
10 AND LYNN CLEMONS, A WILDERNESS SPECIALIST IN OUR WINNEMUKCA  
11 B.L.M. OFFICE. PEPPER SCHULTZ IS THE MAN THAT HAS SET UP OUR  
12 WIRING FOR OUR MICROPHONES. HE'S AN ELECTRONIC SPECIALIST IN  
13 OUR NEVADA STATE OFFICE.

14 AN OFFICIAL RECORDER WILL MAKE A VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT OF  
15 THIS HEARING, AND IT IS ALSO RECORDED. TO ENSURE A COMPLETE AND  
16 ACCURATE RECORD, WE REQUEST THAT ONLY ONE PERSON SPEAK AT A TIME  
17 WHILE THE HEARING IS IN SESSION. NO ONE WILL BE RECOGNIZED  
18 OTHER THAN THE DESIGNATED SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE HEARING  
19 PANEL. MICHELE WHITE OF STATE-WIDE REPORTING IS THE RECORDER.

20 I WANT TO EMPHASIZE THAT WE ARE HOLDING THIS MEETING TO  
21 OBTAIN YOUR VIEWS. TO DO THIS THERE ARE CERTAIN GUIDELINES  
22 WHICH MUST BE OBSERVED DURING THE HEARING TO BEST USE THE TIME  
23 ALLOWED. THESE GUIDELINES ARE LISTED FOR YOU ON THE HANDOUT,  
24 AND I'LL GO OVER THEM NOW. THIS IS THE HANDOUT THAT WAS  
25 AVAILABLE ON THE TABLE WHEN YOU FIRST CAME IN. I'LL GO OVER

1 THOSE GUIDELINES.

2 A., PLEASE CONFINE YOUR STATEMENTS TO YOUR VIEWS ON THE  
3 PROPOSED ACTION AND THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT. ANY  
4 OTHER REMARKS ARE INAPPROPRIATE AT THIS HEARING. B., THIS  
5 HEARING IS STRICTLY DESIGNATED FOR YOU TO GIVE INFORMATION TO  
6 US, THE B.L.M.; THEREFORE, THERE WILL BE NO DEBATE OR  
7 CROSS-QUESTIONS BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS. C., AS FEDERAL  
8 REPRESENTATIVES, WE MUST FOLLOW COMPLETION OF THE NATIONAL  
9 ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT PROCESS, DECIDE ON THE MERITS OF THE  
10 PROPOSED ACTION. PART OF THAT PROCESS IS SEEKING YOUR VIEWS  
11 WHICH WILL ASSIST US IN OUR DELIBERATIONS AND WHICH WILL BE  
12 CONSIDERED PRIOR TO MAKING A DECISION CONCERNING THE PROPOSED  
13 ACTION.

14 AGAIN -- I AGAIN STRESS WE ARE HERE TO LISTEN TO YOUR  
15 VIEWS. THE HEARING PANEL MAY ASK CLARIFYING QUESTIONS AS  
16 NECESSARY AT THE CONCLUSION OF EACH SPEAKER'S STATEMENT. THESE  
17 QUESTIONS, HOWEVER, SHOULD NOT BE INTERPRETED AS EXPRESSIONS OF  
18 ANY PREDETERMINED POSITION OF THE PANEL MEMBER, THE BUREAU OF  
19 LAND MANAGEMENT OR THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR.

20 D., ALL SPEAKERS WILL CONFINE THEIR REMARKS TO THREE  
21 MINUTES OR LESS. THE PERSON SITTING WITH THE COURT RECORDER  
22 WILL ACT AS TIMEKEEPER. LINDA HANSEN HAS A TIMER, AND I WILL  
23 INFORM YOU WHEN ONE MINUTE REMAINS WITH THE HIGH SIGN OF A  
24 FINGER.

25 E., FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE BOTH AN ORAL AND A

1 WRITTEN STATEMENT. I SUGGEST YOUR ORAL STATEMENT HIGHLIGHT THE  
2 POINTS WHICH YOU WISH TO MAKE, STAYING WITHIN THE SPECIFIED  
3 THREE-MINUTE TIME FRAME. IF YOU CHOOSE TO SUBMIT ONLY A WRITTEN  
4 STATEMENT, WE ASSURE YOU THAT IT WILL BE GIVEN THE SAME  
5 CONSIDERATION AS THE ORAL STATEMENTS MADE TONIGHT. COPIES OF  
6 WRITTEN STATEMENTS SHOULD INCLUDE YOUR NAME, ADDRESS AND THE  
7 ORGANIZATION, IF ANY, THAT YOU REPRESENT. WHEN YOU ARE CALLED  
8 ON TO SPEAK, COPIES OF YOUR STATEMENT SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE  
9 HEARING COORDINATOR SITTING WITH THE RECORDER.

10 TO CLARIFY A POINT THAT CAME UP IN LAS VEGAS LAST  
11 NIGHT: IF YOU STAND AT THE PODIUM AND DON'T HAVE A WRITTEN  
12 PREPARATION, FINE. WHEN YOU SPEAK, YOU'RE SPEAKING WITHOUT  
13 NOTES, THAT'S FINE. WE DON'T EXPECT A WRITTEN STATEMENT OF YOUR  
14 SPEECH THAT YOU'RE GIVING. JUST A CLARIFICATION.

15 WRITTEN STATEMENTS CAN ALSO BE SUBMITTED TO THE BUREAU  
16 OF LAND MANAGEMENT HERE IN RENO AND TO THE BUREAU OF LAND  
17 MANAGEMENT AT OUR LAS VEGAS DISTRICT OFFICE. THE RENO OFFICE IS  
18 THE NEVADA STATE OFFICE, P.O. BOX 12000, RENO, NEVADA, 89520.  
19 THE LAS VEGAS DISTRICT OFFICE IS P.O. BOX 26569, LAS VEGAS,  
20 NEVADA, 89126; AND MARK THAT ENVELOPE TO THE ATTENTION OF THE  
21 WILDERNESS D.E.I.S. TEAM LEADER.

22 STATEMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED UNTIL SEPTEMBER 17, 1988.  
23 THOSE INDICATING -- THOSE WHO INDICATED TO US PRIOR TO  
24 THE HEARING A DESIRE TO PRESENT A STATEMENT TODAY WILL SPEAK  
25 FIRST. FOLLOWING THE SCHEDULED SPEAKERS WE WILL HEAR FROM AS

1 MANY OF THE REST OF YOU AS TIME PERMITS. SPEAKERS NOT PRESENT  
2 WHEN CALLED WILL BE PLACED AT THE END OF THE LIST.

3 FINALLY, TRANSCRIPTS OF THESE PROCEEDINGS WILL BE  
4 AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW IN B.L.M.'S RENO AND LAS VEGAS DISTRICT  
5 OFFICE. COPIES CAN BE PURCHASED FROM STATE-WIDE REPORTING, 1601  
6 BONITA VISTA DRIVE IN SPARKS, NEVADA, 89431. THEIR TELEPHONE  
7 NUMBER IS 356-5883. IF YOU WANT THIS ADDRESS AT ANY TIME  
8 AFTERWARD, I'LL HAVE IT HERE. WE DO NOT HAVE BUSINESS CARDS  
9 THAT WE CAN PASS OUT TO YOU, BUT I'VE GOT THE ADDRESS IF YOU  
10 WANT IT. THESE WILL BE PURCHASED FROM STATE-WIDE REPORTING BY  
11 YOU.

12 MR. HOLLINGSWORTH: WHAT WAS THAT PHONE NUMBER AGAIN?

13 MR. CHAPPELL: THAT'S 356-5883.

14 MR. HOLLINGSWORTH: THANK YOU.

15 MR. CHAPPELL: IF THERE ARE ANY QUESTIONS ON THE  
16 HEARING PROCEDURES, WE WILL ANSWER THEM NOW.

17 MS. JANAYE BYERGO WILL BRIEFLY DESCRIBE THE PROPOSED  
18 ACTION, AND THEN WE WILL PROCEED WITH THE PUBLIC COMMENT.  
19 JANAYE?

20 MS. BYERGO: WELCOME AND THANK YOU ALL FOR COMING THIS  
21 EVENING. BEFORE STARTING TONIGHT'S HEARING, I WOULD LIKE TO  
22 PRESENT A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES  
23 ANALYZED IN THE NEVADA CONTIGUOUS LANDS DRAFT WILDERNESS  
24 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT.

25 THIRTEEN WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS AND ONE INSTANT STUDY



1 AREA WERE ADDRESSED IN THE NEVADA CONTIGUOUS LANDS DRAFT  
 2 WILDERNESS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT. THESE STUDY AREAS  
 3 ENCOMPASS SOME TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED AND EIGHTEEN  
 4 ACRES LOCATED WITHIN CLARK, LINCOLN, WHITE PINE AND HUMBOLDT  
 5 COUNTIES, NEVADA. AN ALL WILDERNESS AND NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION  
 6 ALTERNATIVE WERE ANALYZED FOR EACH OF THE WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS  
 7 AND THE ONE INSTANT STUDY AREA. THE ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE  
 8 REPRESENTS CLOSE TO THE MAXIMUM POSSIBLE ACREAGE THAT COULD BE  
 9 RECOMMENDED SUITABLE FOR WILDERNESS DESIGNATION WITHIN EACH  
 10 STUDY AREA. NO PORTION OF A STUDY AREA IS RECOMMENDED SUITABLE  
 11 UNDER THE NO ACTION/NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE. FIVE OF THE  
 12 FOURTEEN STUDY AREAS WERE ANALYZED FOR A PARTIAL WILDERNESS  
 13 ALTERNATIVE. THIS ALTERNATIVE RECOMMENDS AS SUITABLE FOR  
 14 WILDERNESS DESIGNATION LESS THAN THE TOTAL ACREAGE OF A STUDY  
 15 AREA IN ORDER TO ALLOW FOR RESOURCE CONFLICTS AND MANAGEABILITY  
 16 CONSIDERATIONS. THE PROPOSED ACTION FOR THE MARBLE CANYON AND  
 17 LIME CANYON WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS RECOMMENDED PORTIONS OF EACH  
 18 AS SUITABLE FOR WILDERNESS DESIGNATION FOR A TOTAL OF TWENTY-TWO  
 19 THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED AND NINETY-FIVE ACRES. THE PROPOSED ACTION  
 20 FOR THE REMAINING ELEVEN WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS AND THE ONE  
 21 INSTANT STUDY AREA RECOMMENDED THE NO ACTION/NO WILDERNESS  
 22 ALTERNATIVE.

23 SEVERAL ISSUES AND CONCERNS WERE IDENTIFIED BY THE  
 24 PUBLIC AND B.L.M. STAFF DURING THE SCOPING PROCESS THAT WAS  
 25 CONDUCTED LAST AUGUST, 1987. THE EXPLORATION FOR AND

1 DEVELOPMENT OF NONENERGY MINERAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY RESOURCES,  
 2 WILDERNESS VALUES, LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENTS AND MAINTENANCE  
 3 ACTIVITIES, LEVELS OF MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE, DEVELOPMENT OF  
 4 UTILITIES AND MATERIAL SITES, CRUCIAL DESERT TORTOISE HABITAT  
 5 AND LAHONTAN CUTTHROAT TROUT HABITAT WERE THE MAJOR ISSUES  
 6 ADDRESSED AND CARRIED THROUGH THE IMPACT ANALYSIS PORTION OF  
 7 THIS DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT WE ARE ADDRESSING THIS  
 8 EVENING.

9 AGAIN I WOULD LIKE TO STRESS WE ARE ACCEPTING COMMENTS  
 10 UNTIL SEPTEMBER 17TH, 1988; AND I WILL NOW TURN OUR HEARING OVER  
 11 TO MR. CHAPPELL.

12 MR. CHAPPELL: THANK YOU, JANAYE.  
 13 AS SPEAKERS ARE CALLED, PLEASE GIVE A COPY OF YOUR  
 14 STATEMENT, IF YOU HAVE ONE, TO THE CLERK AT THE TABLE; AND WE  
 15 WILL GET TO THAT.

16 MS. BYERGO: HE HAS A QUESTION.  
 17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: WHERE CAN WE GET A COPY OF THE  
 18 IMPACT STATEMENT?

19 MR. CHAPPELL: WE'LL BRING ONE TO YOU RIGHT NOW.  
 20 WOULD YOU GIVE THAT TO CHUCK.  
 21 YOU WON'T HAVE TIME TO READ IT TONIGHT.  
 22 AS SPEAKERS ARE CALLED, PLEASE GIVE A COPY OF YOUR  
 23 STATEMENT, IF YOU HAVE ONE, TO JANAYE; AND SHE WILL CRANK THAT  
 24 INTO THE FINAL DATA THAT THEY'RE COLLECTING ALONG WITH THE ORAL  
 25 TRANSCRIPTS WE GET. PLEASE BEGIN YOUR ORAL STATEMENT BY STATING

3 1 YOUR NAME, YOUR ADDRESS AND THE ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT, IF  
2 ANY.

3 OUR FIRST SPEAKER TONIGHT IS STEVE FRIBERG.

4 MR. FRIBERG: MY NAME IS STEVE FRIBERG. I LIVE AT 265  
5 CLIFF VIEW COURT, RENO, NEVADA, 69523. I'M SELF-EMPLOYED, A  
6 GEOLOGIST.

7 MY COMMENTS ARE VERY BRIEF. I AM OPPOSED TO ANY  
8 WITHDRAWAL OF THESE THIRTEEN AREAS. THE TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND  
9 ACRES THAT YOU'RE PROPOSING, FROM MULTIPLE USE AND PLACING THEM  
10 INTO WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS. I FEEL THAT THIS ATTEMPT TO  
11 DESIGNATE THESE AS W.S.A.'S IS INAPPROPRIATE AT THIS TIME AND  
12 THAT THEY SHOULD HAVE BEEN PLACED IN SEVERAL YEARS AGO AND ALSO  
13 IT'S OF VERY GREAT COST TO THE GOVERNMENT.

14 THAT REALLY CONCLUDES MY COMMENTS AT THIS TIME. I HAVE  
15 NOT HAD TIME TO GO THROUGH THIS VOLUME YET. THANK YOU.

16 MR. CHAPPELL: THANK YOU, MR. FRIBERG. AGAIN, A  
17 WRITTEN STATEMENT UP THROUGH THE 17TH OF SEPTEMBER AFTER YOU'VE  
18 READ IT.

19 OUR SECOND SPEAKER TONIGHT IS TERRY KNIGHT. TERRY  
20 KNIGHT HAD CALLED IN, AND I DON'T KNOW HER; SO, WE'LL MOVE HER  
21 TO THE BACK OF THE ROW.

22 OUR THIRD SPEAKER TONIGHT IS -- OUR SECOND SPEAKER  
23 TONIGHT IS ALLEN MOSS.

24 ALLEN?

25 MR. MOSS: GOOD EVENING. MY NAME IS ALLEN MOSS. I

1 LIVE HERE IN RENO. I AM REPRESENTING THE WESTERN SHOSHONE  
2 NATIONAL COUNSEL. I HAVE A SHORT STATEMENT TO READ HERE. I'LL  
3 LEAVE A COPY WITH YOUR SECRETARY. IT'S OVER THE WESTERN  
4 SHOSHONE LAND RIGHTS.

5 IN 1863 THE UNITED STATES ENTERED INTO A SOLEMN TREATY  
6 OF PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP WITH THE WESTERN SHOSHONE NATION. THE  
7 TREATY OF RUBY VALLEY RECOGNIZES THE EXISTENCE OF THE WESTERN  
8 SHOSHONE NATION AND ITS RIGHT TO OCCUPY ITS ANCESTRAL LANDS IN  
9 NEVADA. THE TREATY HAS NEVER BEEN VIOLATED BY THE WESTERN  
10 SHOSHONE NATION, AND IT HAS NEVER BEEN ABROGATED BY THE UNITED  
11 STATES. THE TREATY DOES CEDE ANY WESTERN SHOSHONE LAND IN THE  
12 UNITED STATES.

13 THE TITLE TO THE WESTERN SHOSHONE ANCESTRAL LANDS HAS  
14 NEVER BEEN LEGALLY EXTINGUISHED. THE ATTEMPT TO ESTABLISH A  
15 WILDERNESS AREA WITHIN THE WESTERN SHOSHONE TERRITORY BY THE  
16 AGENCY OF THE UNITED STATES FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS PREMATURE.  
17 SHOULD YOU WISH TO PROCEED WITH YOUR PLANS TO ESTABLISH  
18 WILDERNESS AREAS WITHIN THE WESTERN SHOSHONE ANCESTRAL  
19 HOMELANDS, CONTACT THE REAL OWNERS OF THIS LAND, WHICH IS THE  
20 WESTERN SHOSHONE NATION.

21 AND THIS IS SUBMITTED BY THE WESTERN SHOSHONE NATIONAL  
22 COUNSEL, AND ACCOMPANYING IT IS ALSO THE TREATY IN THE AREA.  
23 THANK YOU.

24 MR. CHAPPELL: THANK YOU, MR. MOSS.

25 I HAVE NO MORE CARDS. ARE THERE ANY OTHER INDIVIDUALS

1 HERE TONIGHT THAT WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A STATEMENT AT OUR HEARING,  
2 SPEAK FROM THE HEART WHERE YOU'RE COMING FROM?

3 YES, SIR. CAN YOU STATE YOUR NAME?

4 MR. ARNOLD: I'M FRED ARNOLD. I'M PAST PRESIDENT OF  
5 THE NEVADA MINERS & PROSPECTORS ASSOCIATION.

6 AND I'M SURE THAT OUR ORGANIZATION OPPOSES ALL  
7 WILDERNESS, ALL WILDERNESS. THE IDEA IS THE D.L.M. IS PART OF  
8 THE GOVERNMENT AND YOUR JOBS WERE CREATED BY MINING AND HERE YOU  
9 ARE NOW TRYING TO PUT THIS LAND WHERE THE MINERS CAN'T MINE,  
10 CAN'T GET TO THAT LAND TO TAKE THE VALUABLE MINERALS OUT. I  
11 REALLY WISH YOU WOULD NOT DESTROY THIS NATION. IT'S BEEN GREAT  
12 UP UNTIL NOW, BUT THERE'S -- TOO MANY ENVIRONMENTALISTS ARE  
13 TRYING TO DESTROY THIS NATION. THANK YOU.

14 MR. CHAPPELL: THANK YOU, MR. ARNOLD. WOULD YOU WANT  
15 TO FILL OUT ONE OF THESE CARDS, SIR.

16 ARE THERE ANY OTHER SPEAKERS THAT WOULD LIKE TO TALK  
17 TONIGHT?

18 MICHELE, WHAT I'M GOING TO DO IS HAVE THIS PUT ON A  
19 HOLD FOR FIFTEEN MINUTES; AND WE'LL SEE IF ANYONE ELSE COMES IN.  
20 AT THE END OF THE FIFTEEN MINUTES WE'LL DISMISS IF THERE ARE NO  
21 OTHER SPEAKERS.

22 WE'LL START IT AGAIN AT TEN MINUTES TO 8:00.

23 (WHEREUPON A BREAK WAS TAKEN.)

24 MR. CHAPPELL: LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, WE'VE HAD A  
25 FIFTEEN MINUTE RECESS. LET'S OPEN IT UP.

1 I HAVE A COUPLE OF CARDS HERE I'D LIKE TO CALL ON. OUR  
2 FOURTH SPEAKER IS RAY IRWIN.

3 MR. IRWIN: GOOD EVENING. MY NAME IS RAY IRWIN. I'M A  
4 GEOLOGIST. I LIVE HERE IN SPARKS, NEVADA. I'D LIKE TO MAKE A  
5 COUPLE OF BRIEF COMMENTS.

6 FIRST OFF, I WELCOME THE OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE THIS  
7 PUBLIC HEARING. I THINK THAT'S A GOOD STARTING POINT TO BEGIN  
8 WITH. I THINK BOTH THE MINING INDUSTRY -- THAT IS, GOVERNMENT  
9 AGENCIES AND ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS MUST WORK TOGETHER TO TACKLE  
10 THE PROBLEM THAT'S BEFORE US. I AGREE WITH THE ORIGINAL CONCEPT  
11 OF WATER WILDERNESS AREA WAS TO BE. TO ME THAT'S TO PROTECT A  
12 VERY UNIQUE EITHER SCENIC AREA OR WILDLIFE, WHATEVER. THAT  
13 SHOULD BE DONE. THERE IS A DANGER, HOWEVER, IN APPLYING THAT  
14 KIND OF WIDESPREAD IN THAT IT DOES DENY ACCESS TO MULTIPLE LAND  
15 USE FOR RECREATION, MINING AND THINGS LIKE THAT; AND I THINK  
16 THERE HAS TO BE KIND OF A COMMON GROUND. IT'S ENCOURAGING THAT  
17 AT LEAST IN YOUR EVALUATION PROCESS THAT YOU WERE ABLE TO SCREEN  
18 OUT SOME AREAS.

19 BY THE SAME TOKEN, I CAUTION YOU ON THE LIME POINT  
20 WILDERNESS STUDY AREA THAT ALTHOUGH ON THE PROPOSED AREA YOU DID  
21 BACK OFF THE BOUNDARIES AWAY FROM PREVIOUS MINING AREAS I WOULD  
22 BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A BUFFER ZONE LATER ON  
23 BEING APPLIED THAT WOULD ALSO ENTER DEVELOPMENT OF MINING OR  
24 EXPLORATION OUTSIDE THE WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS. THAT HAS BEEN  
25 PROPOSED IN SOME AREAS; AND AGAIN, JUST A WORD OF CAUTION THERE.

1 I THINK THE LIME POINT AREA MIGHT BE LOOKED AT A LITTLE MORE  
2 CAREFULLY.

3 BUT AGAIN, IT'S A HEALTHY START THAT WE ARE ABLE TO  
4 HAVE THIS DIALOGUE; AND I APPRECIATE THAT OPPORTUNITY. THANK  
5 YOU.

6 MR. CHAPPELL: THANK YOU, MR. IRWIN.

7 HAS TERRY KNIGHT ARRIVED YET?

8 ARE THERE ANY OTHER INDIVIDUALS HERE TONIGHT WHO WOULD  
9 LIKE TO MAKE A STATEMENT?

10 SUSAN?

11 YES, SIR.

12 MR. HENNAN: I HAVEN'T FILLED OUT A CARD, BUT I WOULD  
13 LIKE TO.

14 MR. CHAPPELL: FINE. HAVE AT IT. HAVE AT IT.

15 MR. HENNAN: MY NAME IS DAVID HENNAN. I'M A CONSULTING  
16 LANDMAN. I MAKE MY LIVING BY MINING; SO, I, OF COURSE, AM IN  
17 FAVOR OF BEING ABLE TO HAVE ACCESS TO PROPERTIES.

18 LIKE RAY, I DO AGREE WITH SETTING ASIDE CERTAIN AREAS.

19 AND I NOTICE LIKE ON THE B.L.M. M.T. CLASS THERE ARE AREAS OF  
20 WITHDRAWAL SUCH AS ICHTHYOSAURUS SITES AND SO FORTH. HOWEVER,  
21 THE ONE THING ON WILDERNESS AREAS OR AREAS OF WITHDRAWAL, I  
22 UNDERSTAND ALSO YOU'RE DENIED ACCESS BY MOTOR VEHICLES. AND TWO  
23 THINGS I COULD SEE THAT MIGHT NOT BE GOOD ON THAT: NUMBER ONE,  
24 IF YOU HAVE FIRES IN THE AREA, ARE THERE EXCEPTIONS FOR THAT FOR  
25 EMERGENCY VEHICLES TO GET TO IT? AND ANOTHER WOULD BE PEOPLE

1 OBVIOUSLY CAN BACKPACK IN THERE; AND THERE'S A LOT OF PEOPLE --  
2 NOT ALL OF THEM, OF COURSE, BUT SOME THAT DO TAKE IN THEIR OWN  
3 PERSONAL BELONGS AND LEAVE THEM BEHIND SUCH AS TRASH AND THINGS  
4 LIKE THAT.

5 I'M ALL FOR AREAS BEING SET ASIDE FOR RECREATIONAL  
6 PURPOSES WITH CERTAIN RESTRICTIONS AND SO FORTH. I JUST MIGHT  
7 BE A LITTLE BIT CONCERNED ABOUT BEING TOO RESTRICTIVE AS FAR AS  
8 NOT BEING ABLE TO TAKE ANY MOTOR VEHICLES OR ANYTHING ON THERE.

9 AND MY VIEWS RIGHT NOW ARE I DON'T KNOW THAT MUCH ABOUT  
10 IT, I NEED TO DO A LOT OF RESEARCH. BUT I JUST WANTED TO MAKE  
11 THOSE COMMENTS. THANK YOU FOR THE TIME.

12 MR. CHAPPELL: THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

13 I GAVE A CARD THERE FOR MR. IRWIN. IF YOU'D JUST FILL  
14 ONE OUT.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: HERE YOU GO.

16 MR. CHAPPELL: YOU'VE ALREADY DONE IT FOR HIM? THANK  
17 YOU, SIR.

18 ARE THERE ANY OTHER STATEMENTS TONIGHT?

19 YES, SIR.

20 MR. HOLLINGSWORTH: I'D LIKE TO MAKE JUST ONE COMMENT,  
21 OR TWO COMMENTS.

22 MY NAME IS ED HOLLINGSWORTH; AND MY OFFICES ARE AT 226  
23 CALIFORNIA AVENUE, RENO, NEVADA. I AM MINING ORIENTED. WHEN I  
24 SAY THAT, THAT ISN'T NECESSARILY INVOLVING MINING.

25 MY PRIMARY OBJECTIONS TO A WILDERNESS PROGRAM AND, OF

1 COURSE, TO THESE WILDERNESS AREAS SPECIFICALLY IS THE WAY THAT  
2 THE WILDERNESS AREAS ARE DESIGNATED. THERE'S ABOUT THREE OR  
3 FOUR CRITERIA THAT THE GOVERNMENT USES WHICH IS -- WHICH ARE  
4 TOTALLY INCOMPREHENSIBLE AS FAR AS I CAN SEE. NUMBER ONE IS THE  
5 REQUIREMENT THAT THE AREA MUST CONTAIN AT LEAST FIVE THOUSAND  
6 ACRES OF ROADLESS LAND. WE ALL KNOW THAT THE -- MANY OF THE  
7 LANDS, I'M SURE, UNDER CONSIDERATION NOW BY BOTH B.L.M. AND  
8 FOREST SERVICE CONTAIN MANY, MANY, MANY ROADS. THE AGENCIES  
9 HAVE CIRCUMVENTED THE LAW BY HAULING THESE ROADS AWAY, OR  
10 WHATEVER ELSE YOU WANT TO CALL, OR TRAILS OR WHATEVER, OUT HERE  
11 IN NEVADA WHERE WE LIVE BY THESE ROADS. THEY ARE ROADS, AND I  
12 DON'T THINK THERE CAN BE A WILDERNESS AREA WHERE THERE ARE  
13 ROADS. THAT'S THE NUMBER ONE OBJECTION.

14 THE SECOND OBJECTION IS THAT THE BALANCE OF THE  
15 CRITERIA INVOLVES OUTSTANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR, NUMBER ONE,  
16 SOLITUDE AND TWO, PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION. I DEFY  
17 ANYONE TO DESCRIBE TO ME SATISFACTORILY WHAT IS MEANT BY  
18 "OUTSTANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE." SOLITUDE CAN BE HAD  
19 ANYPLACE THAT PEOPLE CAN CONFINED THEMSELVES; A HOTEL ROOM, THE  
20 BACKYARD, UNDER A HOUSE, ON TOP OF A MOUNTAIN, ANYPLACE.  
21 SOLITUDE MEANS NOTHING TO ME, AND I DON'T THINK IT CAN BE  
22 DEFINED.

23 MORE INCOMPREHENSIBLE IS THE CRITERIA OF "PRIMITIVE AND  
24 UNCONFINED RECREATION." I DEFY ANYBODY TO DESCRIBE IN ANY  
25 DETAIL WHATSOEVER WHAT "PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION"

1 ACTUALLY MEANS. NUMBER ONE, WE KNOW THAT IT'S NOT UNCONFINED  
2 BECAUSE OUR EXPERIENCE SO FAR WITH WILDERNESS AREAS THAT HAVE  
3 BEEN DESIGNATED BY THE FOREST SERVICE ARE WELL PATROLLED BY  
4 FOREST SERVICE PERSONNEL. YOU ARE NOT UNCONFINED AT ANY TIME IN  
5 ANY WILDERNESS AREA. NUMBER TWO, WHAT IS MEANT BY "PRIMITIVE"  
6 TYPE OF RECREATION? ARE WE SHOOTING BOWS AND ARROWS AT EACH  
7 OTHER? NO, THAT COULDN'T BE RECREATION BECAUSE THE NATIVES DID  
8 THAT AS PART OF THEIR LIFESTYLE. THE RECREATION HUNTING AND  
9 FISHING IS NOT RECREATION FOR THE PRIMITIVES. THEY DID THAT  
10 BECAUSE THEY HAD TO EAT.

11 SO, THE TERMS THEMSELVES ARE SO AMBIGUOUS AND SO  
12 UNDETERMINABLE THAT IT COULD NOT POSSIBLY EVER BE USED IN  
13 DEFINING THEIR DESIGNATING WHAT MIGHT BE REFERRED TO AS  
14 WILDERNESS. THE WILDERNESS PROGRAM IN ITS INITIAL CONTEXT DOES  
15 HAVE MERIT. WE'D ALL LIKE TO PUT AWAY SOMETHING THAT WE CAN  
16 HOLD ONTO THAT REALLY MEETS THE CRITERIA OF WILDERNESS. THEN  
17 I'D FIGHT LIKE HELL TO KEEP SOME OF YOU OFF AN AREA THAT WAS  
18 WILDERNESS AND WANTED TO DESTROY IT. BUT I'VE BEEN UNABLE AT  
19 THIS TIME IN THIS STATE TO FIND ANYTHING THAT I'D CONSIDER WORTH  
20 FIGHTING FOR. THANK YOU VERY KINDLY FOR THE OPPORTUNITY.

21 MR. CHAPPELL: THANK YOU.  
22 ANYONE ELSE?

23 LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, WE APPRECIATE YOUR COMMENTS.  
24 YOUR HEARTFELT INFORMATION IS GOING TO BE USEFUL TO US.

25 IN VIEW OF THE FACT THERE ARE NO MORE SPEAKERS, I'M

1 GOING TO ADJOURN THIS MEETING TONIGHT.  
 2 WE THANK YOU FOR COMING OUT.  
 3 (WHEREUPON THE PROCEEDINGS WERE CONCLUDED AT 7:58 P.M.)  
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1  
 2 CERTIFICATE  
 3

4 STATE OF NEVADA )

5 ) SS.

6 WASHOE COUNTY )  
 7

8 I, MICHELE WHITE, CSR 282, DO HEREBY CERTIFY THAT I  
 9 REPORTED THE FOREGOING EXCERPT OF PROCEEDINGS; THAT THE SAME IS  
 10 TRUE AND CORRECT AS REFLECTED BY MY ORIGINAL SHORTHAND NOTES  
 11 TAKEN AT SAID TIME AND PLACE BEFORE THE BUREAU OF LAND  
 12 MANAGEMENT.  
 13

14 DATED AT SPARKS, NV., THIS  
 15 15th DAY OF August, 1988

16  
 17 Michele White  
 18

19 MICHELE WHITE, CSR 282  
 20  
 21  
 22

23 STATE-WIDE REPORTING SERVICE

24 1801 BONITA VISTA DR.

25 SPARKS, NEVADA 89431

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DESERT TORTOISE HABITAT MANAGEMENT ON THE PUBLIC LANDS: A RANGEWIDE PLAN

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November 1988

## DIRECTOR'S PREFACE

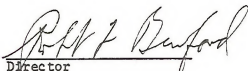
Because the desert tortoise occurs largely on lands administered by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Bureau managers and staff specialists have a unique opportunity to manage habitat so as to ensure that viable populations of this species exist in perpetuity. Building on past and ongoing accomplishments that benefit desert tortoises and their habitats, we intend to focus on this opportunity in a new and important Bureau initiative outlined in the following Desert Tortoise Rangewide Plan.

A year ago, through endorsement of the 1987 Desert Tortoise Habitat Team report, I issued a directive to BLM staff in Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah to develop strategies to begin implementation of the recommendations in that report. The result of their effort is this Rangewide Plan which provides Goals, Objectives, and Management Actions to be used by Bureau managers to improve the status of the desert tortoise. The Plan also formalizes several coordination mechanisms to ensure effective planning and decisionmaking whenever and wherever the desert tortoise is involved.

In the BLM we are obligated to operate within the provisions of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act which mandates a multiple-use/sustained yield approach to managing and using renewable and nonrenewable public land resources. In this process there is ample opportunity to implement the Management Actions presented in the Rangewide Plan which collectively provide a measure of our resolve to improve the status of the desert tortoise and its habitat. Here are a few examples:

- Complete and maintain an inventory of tortoise populations and habitats;
- Develop a system to track desert tortoise habitat quantity and quality through time to allow analysis of cumulative impacts;
- Participate fully on a management oversight group and all technical committees and coordination groups actively considering tortoise issues;
- Implement research and studies to resolve tortoise management issues;
- Manage tortoise habitats using an ecosystem management approach with emphasis on maintaining or restoring natural biological diversity; and
- Where practicable, allow no net loss in quantity or quality of important desert tortoise habitats.

In translating these action statements into on-the-ground accomplishments, we in the Bureau solicit the help of all individuals, groups, and agencies. For the new initiative to work effectively, cooperative thought, work, and funding will be vital. Simply put, the initiative is the Bureau's but the responsibility is shared by all who wish to conserve the tortoise and all who wish to develop land and use resources within the range of the desert tortoise!

  
Director

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this Rangewide Plan is to implement the recommendations contained in the BLM report entitled "Management of Desert Tortoise Habitat." The BLM Director approved that Habitat Team report and its overall tortoise management Goal on October 15, 1987. This Goal is: "...to manage habitat so as to ensure that viable desert tortoise populations exist on public lands. This will be accomplished through cooperative resource management aimed at protecting the species and its habitat."

Most tortoise habitat exists on the public lands. It is the Bureau's responsibility to manage this resource pursuant to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, the Bureau's multiple-use/sustained-yield mandate. Established policies and procedures for wildlife inventory, planning, environmental assessment, monitoring, interagency coordination and cooperation, and research and studies allow appropriate consideration of desert tortoises and their habitats in the Bureau's land-use planning and decision-making processes. This Rangewide Plan also provides Objectives and Management Actions derived from these policies and procedures to be used by the Bureau to improve the status of the tortoise and its habitat.

Recent studies on the genetics and morphometrics of desert tortoises describe three main populations in the United States: Sonoran Desert, Western Mojave Desert, and Eastern Mojave Desert populations (Map 1). Each of these populations have different shell shapes, occur in different habitat types, have differing behavioral patterns, and are affected by particular surface disturbing activities to varying degrees. Management for viable populations of each of these genetic/morphometric types is necessary.

One management strategy for providing future protection and management of desert tortoise habitat will be to categorize tortoise Habitat Areas according to four criteria: (1) importance of the habitat to maintaining viable populations, (2) resolvability of conflicts, (3) tortoise density, and (4) population status (stable, increasing, decreasing). Differing levels of management, consistent with Category Goals, will be applied to Habitat Areas in each Category (Table 1). The Bureau is committed to maintaining viable tortoise populations in Category I and II habitats through implementation of specific Management Actions. The placing of an area of habitat in Category III means that these areas are of lower value in sustaining viable populations of tortoises on the public lands, and thus can be subjected to lower management intensity specifically for tortoises than habitats in the other Categories.

Management Actions are grouped under fourteen Management Objectives. These Management Objectives and accompanying Management Actions represent "where the Bureau intends to go" during the coming decade to meet the Bureau's overall Goal for preserving and managing tortoises and their habitats.

Objective 1. Develop increased awareness of tortoise resources on the public lands.

Objective 2. Complete and maintain on a continuing basis an inventory and monitoring program for tortoise populations and habitats to assist in making management decisions on the public lands.

- Objective 3. Develop and maintain a monitoring program specifically for land-use activities that adversely affect tortoise habitats. This program will be used in the analysis of and response to the cumulative impacts of land-use decisions on tortoise habitats.
- Objective 4. Comply fully with the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, as it relates to tortoise population and habitat management on the public lands.
- Objective 5. Develop and maintain effective coordination and cooperation with outside agencies and Bureau constituents concerning tortoise population and habitat management.
- Objective 6. Conduct research and studies sufficient to develop and document the knowledge and techniques needed to ensure the viability of tortoise populations and habitats in perpetuity.
- Objective 7. Manage the public lands, on a continuing basis, to protect the scientific, ecological, and environmental quality of tortoise habitats consistent with the Category Goals and other Objectives of this Rangewide Plan. This implies management for the existence of an adequate number of healthy and vigorous tortoise populations of sufficient size and resilience to withstand the most severe environmental impacts, and with appropriate sex and age ratios and recruitment rates to maintain viable populations in perpetuity.
- Objective 8. When the need is identified through the Bureau planning system, acquire and/or consolidate, under Bureau administration, management units with high tortoise habitat values, and mitigate the effects of issuing rights-of-way across public lands.
- Objective 9. Ensure that off-highway vehicle use in desert tortoise habitats is consistent with the Category Goals, Objectives, and Management Actions of this Rangewide Plan.
- Objective 10. Ensure that livestock use is consistent with the Category Goals, Objectives, and Management Actions of this Rangewide Plan. This may include limiting, precluding, or deferring livestock use as documented in site-specific plans.
- Objective 11. Provide for herd management for wild horses and burros which is consistent with the Category Goals, Objectives, and Management Actions of this Rangewide Plan. This may include limiting or precluding wild horse and/or burro use, as appropriate.
- Objective 12. Provide for management of wildlife other than desert tortoises on the public lands consistent with the Category Goals, Objectives, and Management Actions of this Rangewide Plan.

Objective 13. Cooperate with state wildlife agencies and APHIS to effect appropriate types and levels of predator control to meet the Category Goals and Objectives of this Rangewide Plan. This will be considered only where predation is interfering with maintaining viable tortoise populations.

Objective 14. Manage the Bureau's energy and minerals program in a manner consistent with the Category Goals and Objectives of this Rangewide Plan.

## INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The desert tortoise (Xerobates agassizii) is one of the most politically sensitive animals with which Federal agencies must be concerned, because tortoises are particularly susceptible to surface-disturbing activities. Normal tortoise populations are characterized by a long period to reproductive maturity, low reproductive output, and low survival of young. These characteristics, which portend an inability to adapt to rapid environmental changes, have led to widespread Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and public recognition of the need to manage tortoise populations and habitats effectively.

Bureau authorities exist through which protection and conservation of tortoises and their habitats can be implemented, particularly if cooperation and assistance is provided by state, county, and other Federal agencies, as well as private landowners, where mixed ownership is a major problem. Many of these authorities have been applied by the Bureau to address tortoise habitat management issues with varying degrees of intensity and success. Other authorities and many important management opportunities remain to be implemented,

The popular appeal of tortoises and their susceptibility to urban encroachment, agricultural development, off-highway vehicle use, livestock grazing, and mining continue to place extreme demands on some wild populations. The results have been that many tortoise populations have declined; local extirpations have occurred; and other populations are no longer viable. Declining habitat quantity and quality are major causes of these conditions, and aggressive conservation and management programs are needed to counter the negative forces acting against tortoises and their habitats.

Recognizing these declines, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) officially listed tortoises on the Beaver Dam slope of Utah as threatened and classified the desert tortoise elsewhere as a candidate for Federal listing. Bureau policy requires that habitats of Federal candidate species be managed and/or conserved to ensure that BLM actions do not contribute to the need to list the species. In 1985 the FWS determined that the desert tortoise warranted final Federal listing as a species, but the listing proposal was set aside because of other higher priorities in the FWS.

The purpose of this Rangewide Plan is to implement the recommendations contained in the BLM report entitled "Management of Desert Tortoise Habitat." That 1987 report was prepared by a Tortoise Habitat Team consisting of representatives of several BLM State, District, and Area Offices and the Nevada Department of Wildlife. The BLM Director approved the Habitat Team report and its overall tortoise management Goal on October 15, 1987. This Goal is: "...to manage habitat so as to ensure that viable desert tortoise populations exist on public lands. This will be accomplished through cooperative resource management aimed at protecting the species and its habitat."



Further, this Rangewide Plan was prepared to provide Objectives and Management Actions to be used by the Bureau to improve the status of the tortoise on the public lands, including efficient planning and research, cost effective on-the-ground implementation of plans and research recommendations, and appropriate awareness of the species in the land-use planning and decision-making processes relating to other public land resources. It is also the intent of the BLM to coordinate and cooperate with interested publics and constituents, state wildlife agencies, and other Federal agencies in implementing on-the-ground tortoise habitat Management Actions.

There are also a few things this Rangewide Plan is not intended to do. It does not address site-specific, population-specific, or individual on-the-ground management actions. These are being or will be developed in individual site-specific activity plans, such as Habitat Management Plans for wildlife, Allotment Management Plans for livestock, Area of Critical Environmental Concern Management Plans for special areas, etc. Development of proposals for budget and work effort required to implement this Rangewide Plan are on-going through the normal annual work planning process and will be developed further following completion of state-level desert tortoise habitat management implementation strategies/plans. National Environmental Policy Act compliance will occur when individual actions are proposed.

## BACKGROUND

Inherent in the Bureau's authorities is a mandate to which the Bureau strives in its wildlife programs. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) formalizes the principles of multiple use and sustained yield as a Bureau mission. Wildlife is identified as one of the principal or major uses of the public lands. The management and preservation of wildlife as a principal multiple use results in a goal of maintenance of habitat diversity. In fact, the habitat diversity present on the public lands administered by the BLM exceeds that of any other landowner in the Nation--governmental or private. High diversity and low human disturbance within habitats generally yields healthy wildlife populations. Such populations offer more management options for maintenance or improvement of their well-being than do threatened or endangered species for which stringent management strategies necessary for recovery diminish available options. Thus, the identification and maintenance of management options for conservation of nonlisted species is of benefit not only to the Bureau, but also to wildlife in general, desert tortoises included.

### Authority.

The past decade has seen great changes in the attitudes of the American public towards the lands the BLM administers under its multiple-use and sustained-yield mandate, FLPMA. These changes have resulted in improved management of the natural resources on the public lands, including the wildlife resources. The vast expanses of prairie, deserts, mountains, and forests, as well as special habitats (floodplains, islands, cliffs, and rock outcrops) provide shelter and food for both huntable and nongame wildlife, furnish reproductive sites and nourishment for hundreds of species of wildlife, and fascinate those people who enjoy open space and natural settings.

Indeed, most tortoise habitat exists on the public lands, and therein lies the essence of the Bureau's responsibility to this resource as set forth in FLPMA:

The Congress declares that it is the policy of the United States that...management be on the basis of multiple use and sustained yield unless otherwise specified by law; the public lands be managed in a manner that will protect the quality of scientific, scenic, historical, ecological, environmental, air and atmosphere, water resource, and archaeological values; that, where appropriate, will preserve and protect certain public lands in their natural condition; that will provide food and habitat for fish and wildlife and domestic animals; and that will provide for outdoor recreation and human occupancy and use....

The Secretary shall prepare and maintain on a continuing basis an inventory of all public lands and their resource and other values....

In the development and revision of land use plans, the Secretary shall --

give priority to the designation and protection of areas of critical environmental concern;

consider the relative scarcity of the values involved...; and

coordinate the land use inventory, planning, and management activities of or for such lands with the land use planning and management programs of other Federal departments and agencies and of States and local governments within which the lands are located....

The principal wildlife management responsibility of the BLM is for habitat. State wildlife agencies and the FWS have responsibility for species management, though the two responsibilities cannot--and need not!--be separated completely, particularly in light of the Bureau's responsibility for recovery of species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 and recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions regarding the authority of the Federal Government over wildlife on Federal lands.

#### BLM Procedures and Policies Relating to Wildlife Habitat.

The following is a discussion of how the Bureau manages wildlife in general, tortoise habitat included. The Bureau has not made full use of these processes to manage and protect tortoises and their habitats in the past, but the current high intensity desert tortoise initiative is a positive prospect for the future.

A. Inventory. It is Bureau policy that wildlife inventories be conducted to provide information needed for the management of BLM-administered lands. Inventories are done in response to Bureau planning efforts or as part of the environmental work (NEPA compliance) associated with specific projects. Through these means, and through monitoring and research, the Bureau has amassed large quantities of information on wildlife populations and habitats--and it will continue to do so.

B. Planning. The optimal long-term process for BLM consideration of tortoise populations and habitats is the Bureau Planning System. Bureau plans are prepared in direct compliance with FLPMA and are based in part on the continuing inventory mandated by that law. Land-use plans are developed to clearly identify means of protecting wildlife habitat and other resources. Appropriate considerations are made during development and analysis of alternatives. These analyses lead to formal Resource Management Plan recommendations. Older Management Framework Plans are currently being replaced by new generation Resource Management Plans.

Bureau planning policy includes application of the principle of multiple use/sustained yield; use of a systematic interdisciplinary approach to achieve integrated consideration of physical, biological, economic, social, and environmental aspects of public land management; giving priority to identification, designation, protection, and management of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs); considering the relative scarcity of the values involved; weighing the long-term benefits and detriments against short-term benefits and detriments; and extensive coordination with other Federal departments and agencies, state and local governments, academia and special interest groups, and Indian tribes.

Site-specific activity plans, such as Habitat Management Plans for wild life, Allotment Management Plans for grazing practices, and Recreation Management Plans for recreation programs, are prepared to implement Resource Management Plans (land-use plans) in particular areas. It is important to note that in many cases wildlife needs can be considered and met as components of nonwildlife activity plans. Examples would include livestock management practices which can reduce competition for forage or decrease the occurrence of trampling of tortoises in certain areas; off-highway vehicle restrictions which might decrease the access to important tortoise habitats; and the design and siting of campgrounds away from vulnerable tortoise populations.

This Rangewide Plan will become part of the routine procedures for the multiple-use management of public lands by the BLM. As such it will be part of the guidance used to develop alternatives addressed in land-use plans and will be carried through the planning process and become a part of the selected alternatives.

C. Environmental Assessment. The Bureau Planning System requires continual updating to remain current and to gain greater specificity. Updating is accomplished at least in part through implementation of the Bureau policy to ensure that Bureau planning and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance efforts are integrated. These processes provide a clear and logical progression from planning through accomplishment, thereby avoiding duplication of effort to the extent possible. It is through the development of NEPA documents and implementation of decisions resulting from them that the project-by-project efforts to manage and protect wildlife and wildlife habitats on the public lands are accomplished.

In the absence of complete planning system data and documents, the Bureau often has an immediate need for better information with which to make project-specific recommendations. Additional inventory is often needed to develop wildlife habitat stipulations included in environmental compliance documents (environmental assessments, impact statements, impact reports, etc.) required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), similar state laws, and the associated regulations (e.g., 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508). Gathering data for environmental documents does not, however, yield all necessary information, such as trend data.

D. Monitoring. It is Bureau policy to implement monitoring activities that reflect a long-term commitment to the management of renewable resources and that will assist in the evaluation of the cumulative impacts of implementing land-use plans and records of decision. BLM monitoring for the benefit of wildlife occurs in five forms: (1) monitoring to determine population trends; (2) monitoring to determine habitat trends; (3) monitoring of actions called for in Habitat Management Plans and other activity plans; (4) monitoring compliance with stipulations contained in Bureau decision documents; and (5) monitoring to determine if mitigation measures are effective.

### Interagency Coordination and Cooperation.

Coordination and cooperation are very important attributes of the Bureau's program to manage and conserve wildlife and wildlife habitats. Such coordination and cooperation will be accomplished primarily through compliance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (see above); the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended; the Sikes Act; national level interagency cooperative agreements; BLM/state intergovernmental memoranda of understanding; Coordinated Resource Management Planning; various other Federal environmental and wildlife laws; where enacted, similar State legislation; etc. Several specifically focused management and technical committees will also be vital to coordination of and cooperation on tortoise issues.

A. Tortoise Management Committee Structure. As recommended in the 1987 Habitat Team report, a structure for desert tortoise committees has been established. The Desert Tortoise Management Oversight Group was established to include management level representatives from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Regions 1, 2, and 6; BLM offices from each of the four involved states; the four involved state wildlife agencies; and the BLM Washington Office. This Group is charged with providing a strong leadership role for implementation of this plan, as well as ensuring that data analysis procedures are standardized, considering funding and research priorities, ensuring that various reports are prepared, and reviewing existing and new laws and plans relating to tortoises.

A second group of autonomous state-level Desert Tortoise Technical Committees exists (or will be established) including representatives from agencies, organizations, and groups with special knowledge of tortoises and their habitats. One of the purposes of these Technical Committees should be to advise and put issues before BLM managers and/or the Management Oversight Group for their consideration. These Committees may also be asked to develop strategy documents for the consideration of BLM State Directors in each of the four states. Such documents should be designed to ensure that the overall Bureau desert tortoise management Goal is reached through the implementation of the Objectives of this Rangewide Plan.

Finally, as necessary, special work groups, coordination committees, advisory groups, or task forces will be established to deal with specific tortoise issues. These groups may be established by involved agencies, the Management Oversight Group, or the Technical Committees, as appropriate.

B. Implementation of the Sikes Act. Most of the Bureau's Habitat Management Plans are developed under the umbrella of the Sikes Act, Title 2--Conservation Programs on Certain Public Land. Strong BLM/state wildlife agency cooperation is mandatory for all Sikes Act Habitat Management Plans:

The Secretary of the Interior...shall, in cooperation with the State agencies..., plan, develop, maintain, and coordinate programs for the conservation and rehabilitation of wildlife, fish, and game....



Each State may enter into a cooperative agreement with...the Secretary of the Interior with respect to those conservation and rehabilitation programs to be implemented under this title within the State on public land which is under his jurisdiction....

Each cooperative agreement entered into under this subsection shall...provide for fish and wildlife habitat improvements or modifications, or both; provide for range rehabilitation where necessary for support of wildlife; provide adequate protection for fish and wildlife officially classified as threatened or endangered pursuant to section 4 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973...or considered to be threatened, rare or endangered by the state agency; (and) require the control of off-highway vehicle traffic....

These statements from the Sikes Act have been incorporated as Bureau policy. All Habitat Management Plans are to be prepared under the Sikes Act authority unless the state wildlife agency chooses not to participate.

#### Research, Development, and Studies.

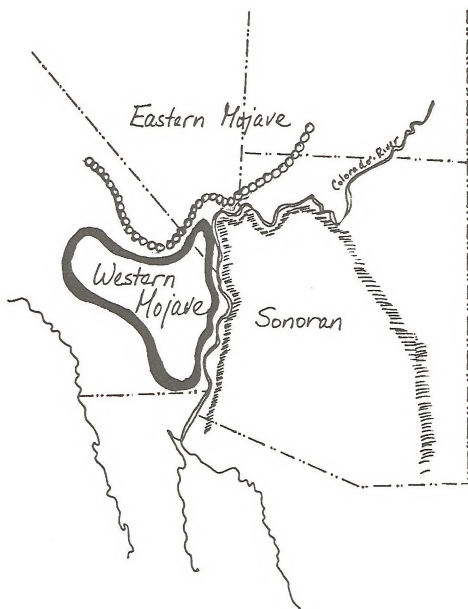
The Bureau has been a leader in tortoise population and habitat management research, study, and information transfer for over a decade. The BLM has conducted dozens of tortoise research projects, studies, and inventories spanning everything from the intensive research necessary to establish basic life history parameters for the species to very specialized studies of desert tortoise foraging habits and movement patterns. Much more needs to be done, however.

A. Research and Development. BLM research and development policy states that such projects shall be user-oriented (applied) and necessary to provide program (management) direction. Research needs of the Bureau are identified in Statements of Need prepared by field office staffs, primarily Resource Area and District Offices and the Denver Service Center. These statements are reviewed at higher levels, and authorizations to develop Project Prospectuses (proposals) are given, as appropriate. Approved research and development projects are conducted and evaluated, data are analyzed, and reports are written and distributed.

B. Studies. While not generally considered R&D by the Bureau, studies account for much of the Bureau's initial information gathering effort for the benefit of tortoises and their habitats. Studies are distinguished from research projects as being short-termed, small in scope, site specific, and directly applicable to immediate management needs.

#### Current Tortoise Population and Habitat Status

Recent studies on the genetics and morphometrics of desert tortoises provide important information for management of the species. Data from mtDNA research indicate that at least two major genetic assemblages exist in the United States, separated by the Grand Canyon-Colorado River system (Map 1). These two groups, separated for 3 to 5 million years, are substantially different from each other. Additional, minor genetic differences can be found in populations occurring north and west of the Grand Canyon-Colorado River. New data on shell shapes closely parallel



MAP 1. The three Desert Tortoise genetic/morphometric assemblages discussed in this Rangewide Plan.



findings of the genetic studies. Three distinct shell shapes have been identified: a California type, a Beaver Dam Slope type, and a Sonoran Desert type. The following descriptions of tortoise populations and habitats incorporate the new information.

A. Sonoran Desert Populations. Sonoran Desert tortoises are very different genetically and morphologically from those to the north and west of the Colorado River. The Sonoran tortoise is generally larger, flatter, and more pear-shaped than its relatives. Populations are very limited in size, distribution, and in selection of habitats. They are found on some steep, rocky slopes of mountain ranges, primarily in Arizona Uplands vegetation dominated by palo verde and saguaro cactus. Populations are island-like and are separated from each other by valleys. The Black and Cerbat mountains of northwest Arizona are more like mountains in the Mojave Desert (creosote/bursage), with tortoises in less steep areas.

Because of the limited nature of the populations and habitat, Sonoran Desert tortoises are particularly vulnerable to human activities. Populations and habitat have been lost to expansion of urban areas and to encroachment of uses such as recreation, roads, and energy related rights-of-way. Grazing, mining, and fire also adversely affect some areas.

B. Western Mojave Desert Populations. The West Mojave Desert as defined here includes parts of the West Mojave, East Mojave, and Colorado Deserts in California and extreme southern Nevada (Map 1). Western Mojave Desert populations have high domed shells, are box-like in shape, and have plastrons of normal length.

The vast majority of all extant tortoise populations are in this unit. Within the typical geographic boundaries of the West Mojave, tortoises occur in creosote bush, alkali sink, and tree yucca habitats in valleys, on fans, and in low rolling hills at elevations ranging from 2,000 to 3,700 feet. In the Fenner and Piute valleys of eastern California and southern Nevada, creosote bush and tree yucca habitats at elevations of 2,200 to 3,500 feet are also preferred.

Tortoises living in the Colorado Desert utilize habitats of (a) creosote bush scrub with ocotillo and cactus, (b) creosote bush scrub and tree yuccas, and (c) microphyll woodland washes or wash stringers at elevations ranging from about 500 to 2,700 feet.

Status and habitat condition vary substantially from one area to another. Populations and habitat in the west Mojave area are characterized by severe and rapid rates of decline. Study plot data from eight sites indicate that populations have declined at rates of 10 percent or more per year for the last six to eight years. Vandalism, collections, raven predation, and disease are a few of the many causes for population declines. Habitat is deteriorating and being lost from urban, energy, and mineral development, vehicle-oriented recreation, grazing, and other uses.

The population in Fenner Valley was relatively stable a few years ago but is now under pressure from raven predation and continuing livestock grazing, recreational use, and yucca harvest on private lands. In Piute Valley in Nevada, the population is in a severe state of decline. Issues there include cattle grazing, urban encroachment, recreational use, and mineral development.

In the Colorado Desert, tortoise populations were believed to be the most stable and of the highest densities in the geographic range until 1987. Since that time, study plot data from the Ward and Chemehuevi valleys indicate declines in recruitment of juveniles caused by raven predation. The Chuckwalla Valley populations are experiencing increased pressures from vandalism, and in the Chuckwalla Bench Area of Critical Environmental Concern prime populations have declined 60 percent since 1982, probably due to disease.

Problems with habitat deterioration in the Colorado Desert vary considerably from the Ward and Chemehuevi valleys to the Chuckwalla Valley and Bench. Losses are relatively minor in the Ward and Chemehuevi valleys compared with the West Mojave area, but pressure is increasing for development of more power line corridors, agricultural development, and urban development. Habitat is under greater threat of encroachment in the Chuckwalla area from agricultural and associated urban development, mining, and increased recreational use. The Chuckwalla area is particularly vulnerable because it is relatively small and the tortoise habitat within it is fragmented.

C. Eastern Mojave Desert Populations. For management purposes, the East Mojave tortoise populations are best treated by genetic rather than by the typical geographical subdivisions. The western-most boundary of the East Mojave genetic unit occurs in the vicinity of the East Mojave Scenic Area in eastern California (Shadow Valley, Ivanpah Valley, and Kelso regions). From the California border, East Mojave populations extend northeast and north into Nevada to the Las Vegas Valley and Coyote Spring Valley, and eastward to the Beaver Dam Slope and Paradise Valley of southwestern Utah and extreme northwestern Arizona.

Shell shapes of tortoises in this unit vary from a high-domed, box-like form in the Ivanpah Valley to a substantially flatter form on the Beaver Dam Slope. Beaver Dam Slope tortoises also have a very short plastron compared with other tortoises in the geographic range and are a very distinct type.

East Mojave tortoise populations typically occur in creosote bush-burro bush or creosote bush-tree yucca vegetation types. The forage base consists of native winter and summer annuals, perennial grasses, cacti, a few half-shrubs, and some exotic introduced species.

In general, East Mojave tortoise populations and habitats are experiencing downward trends from urban development, long-term livestock grazing, mining, large-scale water development, off-highway vehicle use, collecting, and many other human-related uses. Populations have been fragmented and are in the process of becoming increasingly isolated by urban development, highway construction, and development within power line corridors.

## CATEGORIZATION OF TORTOISE HABITAT AREAS

Desert Tortoise Habitat Areas will be delineated by BLM District Managers (with appropriate public review) to meet the three Category Goals described in Table 1. Such categorization of habitats will assist the BLM in attaining the overall tortoise habitat management Goal established by the Director (see Introduction). That Goal is translated into more specific Goals for each of the three habitat Categories. These Category Goals will, in turn, be reached by implementing the Objectives and related Management Actions in the next section of this Rangewide Plan.

The purpose of the categorization of habitats is to provide for future protection and management of these areas and their associated desert tortoise populations. Differing levels of management, consistent with Category Goals, will be applied to Habitat Areas in each Category. The Bureau is committed to maintaining viable tortoise populations in Category I and II habitats through implementation of the Management Actions in the next section. The placing of an area of habitat in Category III means that these areas are of lower value in sustaining viable populations of tortoises on the public lands, and thus can be subjected to lower management intensity specifically for tortoises than habitats in the other Categories.

The criteria in Table 1 provide guidelines for categorization by decision makers. They are not intended to be used as a cookbook formula. For example, some modification of the conflict resolvability criterion may be required in checkerboard or braided land ownership patterns. All conflicts may not be resolvable, but the significance of the other three criteria may clearly place the Habitat Area into Category I.

The criteria used to categorize tortoise habitats include the following: (1) importance of the habitat to maintaining viable populations, (2) resolvability of conflicts, (3) tortoise density, and (4) population status (stable, increasing, decreasing). Information concerning all of these criteria may not be available or relevant for all categorizations.

Note that tortoise density and population trends will often be more useful in evaluating management progress within Categories than for actual categorization of Habitat Areas. Usually, the overriding criteria for categorization will be viable population considerations and conflict resolvability. The concept of resolvability includes mitigation; thus, conflicts will be judged resolvable whenever the actions required to resolve the conflicts are within the Bureau's discretion.

Where schedules permit, areas will be categorized through resource management planning. Where schedules do not permit, categorizations will be completed using existing data and will be reconsidered whenever a Resource Management Plan is prepared or revised. The results will be documented as a part of the approved plan.

Table 1. Goals and criteria for three Categories of desert tortoise Habitat Areas. The criteria are ranked by importance to the categorization process, with Criterion 1 being the most important.

Items	Category I Habitat Areas	Category II Habitat Areas	Category III Habitat Areas
Category Goals	Maintain stable, viable populations and protect existing tortoise habitat values; increase populations, where possible.	Maintain stable, viable populations and halt further declines in tortoise habitat values.	Limit tortoise habitat and population declines to the extent possible by mitigating impacts.
Criterion 1	Habitat Area essential to maintenance of large, viable populations.	Habitat Area may be essential to maintenance of viable populations.	Habitat Area not essential to maintenance of viable populations.
Criterion 2	Conflicts resolvable.	Most conflicts resolvable.	Most conflicts not resolvable.
Criterion 3	Medium to high density or low density contiguous with medium or high density.	Medium to high density or low density contiguous with medium or high density.	Low to medium density not contiguous with medium or high density.
Criterion 4	Increasing, stable, or decreasing population.	Stable or decreasing population.	Stable or decreasing population.

## TORTOISE MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Thus far this Rangewide Plan has dealt with (1) the overall Goal for tortoise habitat management on BLM-administered lands; (2) the Bureau's general strategy for implementing its tortoise program; (3) the Bureau's authorities, procedures, and policies relating to tortoise population and habitat management; and categorization of tortoise Habitat Areas. This information, along with what is in the 1987 Habitat Team report (see above), represents "where the Bureau is" with tortoise management on the public lands. The following list of Management Objectives and Actions represents "where the Bureau intends to go" during the coming decade to meet the Bureau's overall Goal for preserving and managing tortoises and their habitats.

The overall Goal is "...to manage habitat so as to ensure that viable desert tortoise populations exist on public lands. This will be accomplished through cooperative resource management aimed at protecting the species and its habitat."

Management Actions are grouped under fourteen Management Objectives. These Objectives are not listed in priority order because many things may well proceed concurrently, and the relative importance of each Objective may be different between states or between areas.

- Objective 1. Increased Awareness;
- Objective 2. Inventory and Monitoring;
- Objective 3. Cumulative Impacts;
- Objective 4. Endangered Populations;
- Objective 5. Coordination and Cooperation;
- Objective 6. Research and Studies;
- Objective 7. Management of Tortoise Habitat;
- Objective 8. Lands and Realty Actions;
- Objective 9. Off-highway Vehicles;
- Objective 10. Livestock Use;
- Objective 11. Wild Horses and Burros;
- Objective 12. Wildlife Habitat Management;
- Objective 13. Predator Control; and
- Objective 14. Energy and Mineral Development.

This Rangewide Plan represents an element of BLM's Planning System. Final categorizations will be accomplished through the resource management planning process. Specific project proposals and other proposed uses will be subject to environmental analysis as necessary to comply with NEPA and to reach informed decisions. Because environmental analysis within the planning process will bring about full consideration of the effects of actions resulting from this Rangewide Plan, an environmental assessment of this plan is not considered to be necessary.

Each Management Action relates directly to the Objective above it and should not be used inconsistent with the intent of that Objective. Most Management Actions also relate to Category Goals listed in Table 1. Ultimately, each Management Action and Objective relates directly to the overall Goal for tortoise management stated above. Keeping these relationships in mind will allow use of the following statements in their full, correct contexts.

The definition of the term "mitigation" as used in this document is found in the Council for Environmental Quality (CEQ) guidelines (40 CFR 1508.20):

- (a) avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action on parts of an action;
- (b) minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation;
- (c) rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment;
- (d) reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action; and
- (e) compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.

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Objective 1. Develop increased awareness of tortoise resources on the public lands.

Management Action 1A. Develop an overall public education program concerning tortoise populations and habitats.

- (1) Develop a desert tortoise public affairs plan in each state by the end of FY 1989 that includes time frames and funding strategies for things such as items 2-4 immediately following.
- (2) Prepare educational packets for distribution at agency offices and by rangers, wardens, deputy sheriffs, etc.
- (3) Prepare and distribute radio and television announcements, videos, slide programs, brochures, posters, decals, stickers, etc.
- (4) Change and update existing visitor use maps and brochures to include information to protect and conserve tortoises (see Management Action 1B for examples). Exclude density information and categorizations.



Management Action 1B. Increase public awareness of important tortoise issues wherever the public might congregate in the field. Signs, brochures, and other information media should deal with issues such as proper treatment of tortoises found on roads, the dangers of releasing diseased captive tortoises into the wild, the senselessness and impacts of vandalism and shooting, and the legalities of collecting tortoises for pets.

Management Action 1C. Share tortoise management expertise and data by holding workshops, developing short-term assignments for key personnel, conducting training, and providing formal information storage and transfer.

Management Action 1D. Develop an awareness in other Bureau disciplines of tortoises and their habitats, and capitalize on this increased awareness through a strong day-to-day advocacy for tortoise habitat protection and management, particularly in the BLM planning, environmental assessment, and budget processes.

Management Action 1E. Develop an interagency, intergovernmental, and public awareness of Bureau tortoise habitat Management Actions and related accomplishments through an active information and education program, a timely technical information transfer process, and other means.

Management Action 1F. Distribute this Rangewide Plan for desert tortoise management to other tortoise habitat managers/owners within 90 days of signing, and encourage their adoption of similar Goals, Objectives, and Management Actions for the lands they administer.

Objective 2. Complete and maintain on a continuing basis an inventory and monitoring program for tortoise populations and habitats to assist in making management decisions on the public lands.

Management Action 2A. Complete and maintain an inventory of tortoise populations and habitats occurring on public lands. Assign Habitat Areas to Categories according to criteria set forth elsewhere in this Rangewide Plan as soon as adequate information is available (i.e., many Habitat Areas can be categorized soon after this Rangewide Plan is approved). The target dates for completion of inventory and categorization are as follows:

California	March 1989;
Utah	March 1989;
Nevada	September 1989; and
Arizona	September 1992.



Management Action 2B. Monitor study plots to ensure acquisition of adequate information to reach the Category Goal for each Habitat Area according to prescribed schedules developed in each state during FY 1989. This should be done in each study plot at least every four or five years based on the needs and characteristics of the area being monitored.

Management Action 2C. Ensure that tortoise population and habitat monitoring and inventory are coordinated as needed among all entities gathering such information in order to avoid duplication of effort and undue disturbance to the tortoises involved.

Management Action 2D. Use tortoise population and habitat monitoring techniques and terminology (where appropriate) that will give standard data elements for input into the Bureau's land-use planning and environmental assessment processes.

(1) Develop a draft tortoise inventory and monitoring handbook by the end of FY 1988. No matter what technique is used, data must be of sufficient quality to permit state-to-state, population-to-population, and year-to-year comparisons.

(2) Conduct a workshop in November 1988 to finalize the draft inventory and monitoring handbook for Washington Office and State Director approvals. The relationship between inventory, monitoring, and categorization of Habitat Areas should also be clarified at this workshop.

Management Action 2E. Provide training to appropriate BLM personnel on a continuing basis on available inventory and monitoring techniques for tortoise populations and habitats.

Management Action 2F. Ensure that all types of monitoring are conducted. These types include monitoring of tortoise populations, tortoise habitats, and pertinent management decisions in land-use plans, as well as compliance with relevant stipulations in records of decision and monitoring to determine the effectiveness of mitigations.

Objective 3. Develop and maintain a monitoring program specifically for land-use activities that adversely affect tortoise habitats. This program will be used in the analysis of and response to the cumulative impacts of land-use decisions on tortoise habitats.

Management Action 3A. Develop a system by the end of FY 1989 to track desert tortoise habitat quality and quantity through time, and report biennially (1990, 1992, 1994, etc.) on the cumulative impacts of land-use actions on desert tortoise Habitat Areas.

Management Action 3B. Determine by the end of FY 1989 the feasibility of using Geographic Information System technology as part of the Bureau's Land Information System to document the progress of land use as it affects tortoise habitat quantity and quality. This analysis should consider the costs of documenting the land uses existing as of January 1, 1990, and the possibility of reconstructing the conditions existing in 1980 and 1985.

Objective 4. Comply fully with the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, as it relates to tortoise population and habitat management on the public lands.

Management Action 4A. Comply with section 2 of the Endangered Species Act which concerns management of populations and habitats of unlisted species (populations) in a manner to ensure that species do not become threatened or endangered through man's actions.

Management Action 4B. Take a leadership role in the management of officially listed populations of desert tortoises by developing and carrying out programs for their recovery.

Management Action 4C. Assign officially determined (pursuant to section 4 of the Endangered Species Act) desert tortoise Critical Habitats to Category I. Categorization of the non-Critical Habitat of listed populations will depend on application of the criteria set forth in Table 1 of this Rangewide Plan.

Objective 5. Develop and maintain effective coordination and cooperation with outside agencies and Bureau constituents concerning tortoise population and habitat management.

Management Action 5A. Document in administrative reports and published papers the results of all tortoise management research/studies/monitoring and individual tortoise Management Actions to facilitate information transfer and to minimize duplication of research efforts. This should be done through annual progress reports and final reports within one year of completion of the projects.

Management Action 5B. Coordinate and provide BLM assistance (logistical, financial, volunteer manpower, etc., as appropriate) to those conducting non-Bureau studies and research involving tortoises and their habitats on the public lands. Assisted projects must contribute to reaching the Bureau's tortoise management Goals, Objectives, and/or Management Actions.

Management Action 5C. Pursuant to Title 2 of the Sikes Act, coordinate the Bureau's tortoise population and habitat inventory, planning, management, and monitoring activities with similar activities and programs of other Federal departments and agencies and/or appropriate state and local governments.

Management Action 5D. Coordinate tortoise management efforts with county and other local planning and zoning restrictions as appropriate and to the extent allowed by Federal laws and regulations.

Management Action 5E. Participate fully on special oversight groups, technical committees, and coordination groups that deal with tortoise population and habitat issues and management opportunities.

(1) Provide for the functioning of a Desert Tortoise Management Oversight Group consisting of management-level representatives from FWS Regions 1, 2, and 6; BLM offices from each of the four involved states; the four involved state wildlife agencies; and the BLM's Washington Office. The responsibilities of this group are listed in the 1987 Habitat Team report.

(2) Assist in establishing (if necessary) and help provide for the functioning of four autonomous state-level Desert Tortoise Technical Committees. Representation should include people with special knowledge of tortoises and their habitats. One of the purposes of these Technical Committees should be to advise and put issues before BLM managers and/or the Management Oversight Group for their consideration. All such Committees should be formalized by March of 1989.

(3) Establish coordination groups to deal with specific desert tortoise issues and the overall program, with emphasis on coordination with user groups. BLM District Advisory Councils can be used to serve this purpose, if appropriate.

Objective 6. Conduct research and studies sufficient to develop and document the knowledge and techniques needed to ensure the viability of tortoise populations and habitats in perpetuity.

Management Action 6A. Conduct a workshop during FY 1989 to clarify the concept of "viable population" as it relates to the desert tortoise in each of the genetically isolated populations.

Management Action 6B. Implement research and studies to answer the questions raised in Appendix 2 of the 1987 Habitat Team Report. For example, data gaps include the effects of grazing on tortoise populations and habitats, tortoise nutritional needs, acceptable levels of off-highway vehicle activity in tortoise habitat, the effects of habitat fragmentation and disturbance in general, the estimation of viable population levels, the effects of predation (ravens, coyotes, etc.) on tortoise populations, the effects of tortoise collection and subsequent release on wild populations, the long-term effects of wildfires on tortoise populations, the genetics of tortoise populations, and survivorship of relocated tortoises.

Management Action 6C. Develop a tortoise research and studies plan by the end of FY 1989. This should be done within the framework of the Management Oversight Group.

Objective 7. Manage the public lands, on a continuing basis, to protect the scientific, ecological, and environmental quality of tortoise habitats consistent with the Category Goals and other Objectives of this Rangewide Plan. This implies management for the existence of an adequate number of healthy and vigorous tortoise populations of sufficient size and resilience to withstand the most severe environmental impacts, and with appropriate sex and age ratios and recruitment rates to maintain viable populations in perpetuity.

Management Action 7A. Develop a strategy document in each involved BLM state to ensure that the overall Bureau Goal for tortoise habitat management is reached through implementation of the Objectives in this Rangewide Plan. These documents shall be completed during FY 1989.

Management Action 7B. Manage tortoise habitats using an ecosystem management approach with emphasis on maintaining or restoring natural biological diversity. Document in a biennial report (1990, 1992, 1994, etc.) how this Management Action has been implemented.

Management Action 7C. Ensure adequate consideration of tortoise populations and habitats in the Bureau's land-use planning and decision-making processes, and mitigate for impacts to the extent mandated by law or appropriate under existing policy.

(1) Incorporate the Category Goals, Objectives, and Management Actions of this Rangewide Plan in new Resource Management Plans as they are developed.

(2) Where appropriate, update completed land-use plans through the amendment process to include the Category Goals, Objectives, and Management Actions of this Rangewide Plan.

Management Action 7D. Manage all desert tortoise Habitat Areas consistent with the appropriate Category Goals. This should be accomplished through the development and implementation of formal land-use plans that result in on-the-ground management actions.

Management Action 7E. Where practicable, allow no net loss in quantity or quality (vegetation composition and structure, levels of human disturbance) of Category I and II Habitat Areas. Where no reasonable alternatives to proposed actions affecting such tortoise habitats exist, losses may occur only if mitigation is not practicable. Document this through a biennial analysis of cumulative impacts (see Objective 3).

Management Action 7F. In placing tortoise Habitat Areas into Categories, consider historically used, high potential tortoise habitats, the protection of which will assist in meeting the Objectives and Category Goals of this Rangewide Plan. Categorize such areas appropriately, and protect them, where warranted.

Management Action 7G. Identify specific and quantifiable tortoise management objectives within each categorized Habitat Area.

(1) Begin habitat planning efforts with a knowledge of existing conditions of vegetation and tortoise populations throughout the land area.

(2) Evaluate the potential of the land area to respond to management. Explore the range of habitat conditions for which it may be possible to manage. Relate these potential conditions to the habitat requirements of the tortoise.

(3) Set the tortoise management objectives for the land area. Specify the features of habitat composition and structure desired to meet the habitat requirements of the tortoise.

(4) Communicate the desired tortoise population and habitat conditions in specific and quantitative terms. Reach a decision on the specific management prescription to be used in the area.

(5) Implement the management prescription in the field.

Management Action 7H. Provide appropriate input into fire management plans to minimize the effects of wildfires on tortoise habitats.

Objective 8. When the need is identified through the Bureau planning system, acquire and/or consolidate, under Bureau administration, management units with high tortoise habitat values, and mitigate the effects of issuing rights-of-way across public lands.

#### Retention and Acquisition of Lands

Management Action 8A. Use the Bureau's land exchange authorities as opportunities arise to consolidate tortoise habitats on the public lands, with emphasis on Category I and II tortoise Habitat Areas.

Management Action 8B. Purchase Category I and II tortoise Habitat Areas consistent with the scope and intent of Bureau planning documents.

Management Action 8C. Encourage private donations of land, funds, and services to facilitate acquisition of land with high tortoise habitat values.

Management Action 8D. Retain Category I and II tortoise Habitat Areas unless (a) it clearly is in the National public interest to dispose of them and (b) losses can be mitigated.

#### Rights-of-Way

Management Action 8E. Manage the issuance of rights-of-way in a manner that will minimize their effects on tortoise populations and habitats.

(1) Grant new rights-of-way through Category I and II tortoise Habitat Areas only if no reasonable alternative exists. Mitigation for habitat losses is required.

(2) Mitigate along rights-of-way to minimize direct losses of tortoises, fragmentation or reduction of habitat, and the effects of construction.

Objective 9. Ensure that off-highway vehicle use in desert tortoise habitats is consistent with the Category Goals, Objectives, and Management Actions of this Rangewide Plan.

Management Action 9A. Where necessary to achieve Category Goals, close Category I and II tortoise Habitat Areas to off-highway vehicle use. Use outside of closed areas can be allowed provided it is not inconsistent with the Category Goals and Objectives of this Rangewide Plan.

Management Action 9B. Where information is inadequate, evaluate the impacts of both existing and new off-highway vehicle uses to determine if such uses are consistent with the Goals and Objectives of this Rangewide Plan.

Management Action 9C. Minimize off-highway vehicle use in Category I and II tortoise Habitat Areas whenever information for decision making is adequate. This may include restriction of organized and casual off-highway vehicle use to designated roads and trails, restriction of such use to existing roads and trails, placing limits and conditions on the authorization of commercial and competitive events, etc.

Objective 10. Ensure that livestock use is consistent with the Category Goals, Objectives, and Management Actions of this Rangewide Plan. This may include limiting, precluding, or deferring livestock use as documented in site-specific plans.

Management Action 10A. In every grazing allotment which includes tortoise habitat, manage livestock to allow adequate and suitable native forage, space, and cover to be available to tortoises throughout the year.



Management Action 10B. Where site potential permits, manage livestock grazing to increase native perennial grasses, forbs, and shrubs that are required by tortoises.

Management Action 10C. Allow utilization of tortoise forage and cover plants by livestock only to levels which allow for long-term plant vigor and adequate standing vegetation for late summer-fall tortoise use.

Management Action 10D. Allow only those new range improvements for livestock in Category I and II Habitat Areas which will not create conflicts with tortoise populations. Mitigation for such conflicts is permissible to make the net effect of the improvements positive or neutral to desert tortoise populations. Conflicting existing improvements should be eliminated as opportunities arise.

Objective 11. Provide for herd management for wild horses and burros which is consistent with the Category Goals, Objectives, and Management Actions of this Rangewide Plan. This may include limiting or precluding wild horse and/or burro use, as appropriate.

Management Action 11A. Continue to maintain appropriate management levels of wild horses and burros consistent with existing land-use plans and/or activity plans.

Management Action 11B. Ensure that appropriate monitoring of wild horse and burro herds occurs, and use such monitoring data to help develop management prescriptions for desert tortoise habitats.

Management Action 11C. Where site potential permits, manage grazing by wild horses and burros to increase native perennial grasses, forbs, and shrubs required by tortoises as food and cover.

Management Action 11D. Allow only those new range improvements for wild horses and burros in Category I and II Habitat Areas which will not create conflicts with tortoise populations. Mitigation for such conflicts is permissible to make the net effect of the improvements positive or neutral to desert tortoise populations. Conflicting existing improvements should be eliminated as opportunities arise.

Objective 12. Provide for management of wildlife other than desert tortoises on the public lands consistent with the Category Goals, Objectives, and Management Actions of this Rangewide Plan.

Management Action 12A. Manage wildlife habitat to allow adequate and suitable native forage, space, and cover to be available for desert tortoises throughout the year.



Management Action 12B. Allow the introduction or reintroduction of wildlife species into Category I and II Habitat Areas only if such actions will not create conflicts with tortoise populations.

Management Action 12C. Allow only those new range improvements for wildlife that will not create conflicts with tortoise populations. Mitigation for such conflicts is permissible to make the net effect of the improvements positive or neutral to desert tortoise populations. Conflicting existing improvements should be eliminated as opportunities arise.

Objective 13. Cooperate with state wildlife agencies and APHIS to effect appropriate types and levels of predator control to meet the Category Goals and Objectives of this Rangewide Plan. This will be considered only where predation is interfering with maintaining viable tortoise populations.

Management Action 13A. Where predation problems are suspected, inventory predator populations and study their food habits and behaviors to determine which categorized tortoise Habitat Areas require predator control to meet the Category Goals and Objectives of this Rangewide Plan.

Management Action 13B. Evaluate Bureau actions to determine whether or not they encourage the proliferation or range expansion of predator populations. Seek alternatives which minimize the increase and/or spread of predator populations.

Objective 14. Manage the Bureau's energy and minerals program in a manner consistent with the Category Goals and Objectives of this Rangewide Plan.

Management Action 14A. Consider withdrawal from mineral entry for Category I tortoise Habitat Areas.

Management Action 14B. Mitigate the impacts to desert tortoise Habitat Areas from locatable mineral exploration and development to the extent possible through judicious implementation of the Bureau's 3802 and 3809 surface management regulations.

Management Action 14C. Use the Bureau's discretionary authorities relating to leasable and salable minerals to meet the Category Goals and Objectives of this Rangewide Plan.

Management Action 14D. Mitigate the impacts of energy and mineral development in tortoise habitat to the extent possible under existing laws and regulations.





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